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Cass Family Clinic Niles begins dental center construction

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Construction is underway at Cass Family Clinic's Niles facility to make way for its Niles Community Dental Health Center – unifying healthcare services under one roof.

The Niles Community Dental Health Center, which is moving two miles from its current location at 122 Grant St., will occupy 4,500 square feet in the west wing of Cass Family Clinic's Niles facility. Construction began in March. The facility is expected to open in September.

"Having our dental team under the same roof as our other healthcare services in Niles provides integrated care for our patients," said Joe Gavan, CEO of Cass Family Clinic. "We're excited and proud to open this new space to better serve our community."

The facility will feature 12 treatment rooms and provide a full spectrum of dental services, including hygiene exams, prophy, debridement, sealants, scale and root planning, fillings, extractions, dentures, crowns, root canals, and space maintainers.

In addition to high-quality dental care, the center will include features not commonly found in other practices, such as a dedicated special needs treatment room and wheelchair-accessible equipment. A state-of-the-art lift system will enable patients to receive care directly from their wheelchair, improving both comfort and accessibility.

With the integrated healthcare offerings in Niles, Cass Family Clinic will increase its staff to 31 at the newly-constructed dental clinic, including University of Michigan dental interns, who will join in the fall.

Barker Nestor Architecture + Design of Chicago designed the new dental space, while construction is being managed by Astrong Construction of Niles.

Corewell Health announces summer blood drives

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

ST. JOSEPH — Corewell Health, in partnership with Versiti Blood Center of Michigan, is hosting blood drives scheduled throughout Southwest Michigan this summer.

The blood drives will take place during the following dates and times:

- Tuesday, June 17, from noon to 4:30 p.m., at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospitals - St. Joseph Hospital, Frederick Upton Education Center, 1234 Napier Ave., St. Joseph
- Wednesday, June 18, from 12:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospitals - Niles Hospital, Lower Meeting Room, 31 N. St. Joseph Ave., Niles
- Tuesday, Aug 19, from noon to 4:30 p.m., at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospitals - St. Joseph Hospital, Frederick Upton Education Center, 1234 Napier Ave., St. Joseph
- Wednesday, Aug. 20, from 12:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospitals - Niles Hospital, Lower Meeting Room, 31 N. St. Joseph Ave., Niles

Versiti Blood Center of Michigan is the primary provider of blood for Corewell Health hospitals, and blood donated can help trauma victims, surgery patients, premature babies, people with anemia and those undergoing treatment for cancer.

The process for donating blood takes about an hour. This includes registration, a brief medical screening and blood collection. Individuals 17 and older who are in good health and not experiencing symptoms of cold or flu may donate blood. Donors who are 16 years old may donate but must have parent or guardian permission. A photo ID is required to donate.

For information on donating blood or to schedule an appointment, please visit donate.michigan.versiti.org or call (866) 642-5663.

Court of Appeals rejects appeal in 2022 road department worker death case

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications Contributor

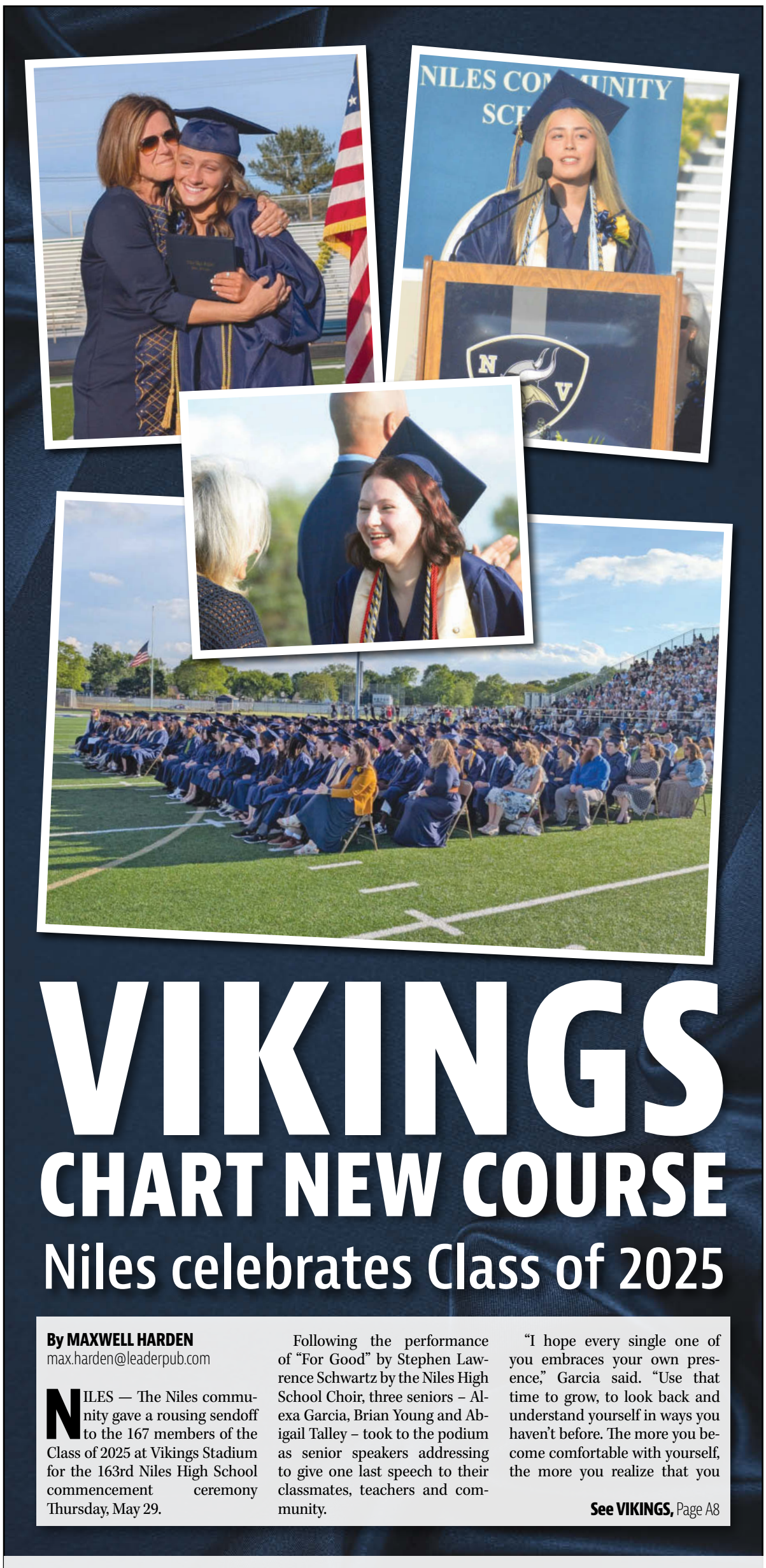
NILES — The trial of the man accused of hitting and killing a Berrien County Road Department worker while driving drunk looks to be back on after the Michigan Court of Appeals denied his appeal Tuesday.

Johnson

Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Jerry Vigansky said Wednesday that the case against Taylor Ryan Johnson should now go back on the trial schedule docket. Defense attorney Jessica LaFond said her office is still assessing whether they will appeal the Court of Appeals decision. She said her goal is to ensure her client has a fair trial.

Johnson, 37, of Buchanan, faces a charge of driving while intoxicated causing

See REJECTS, Page A8



VIKINGS CHART NEW COURSE

Niles celebrates Class of 2025

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The Niles community gave a rousing sendoff to the 167 members of the Class of 2025 at Vikings Stadium for the 163rd Niles High School commencement ceremony Thursday, May 29.

Following the performance of "For Good" by Stephen Lawrence Schwartz by the Niles High School Choir, three seniors – Alexa Garcia, Brian Young and Abigail Talley – took to the podium as senior speakers addressing to give one last speech to their classmates, teachers and community.

"I hope every single one of you embraces your own presence," Garcia said. "Use that time to grow, to look back and understand yourself in ways you haven't before. The more you become comfortable with yourself, the more you realize that you

See VIKINGS, Page A8

MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

OBITUARIES

Otto Dean Krueger
Frederick Kirk Smith
James Smock
Robert Eugene Leet
Elwood Dye
Vickie Martin
Rosemary Kaiser
Karen Robinson
Jeannette Marie Thornton
Louis A. Spletzer
RaeAnn Clark
Mary Ann Everman
Kevin G Richardson
Ann Flora
Sherman Ross

A6

FRANKLY

TIPS, QUIPS, AND BLIPS

"If we put 1/20 th of our defense budget into cancer research, we'd have a cure by now."

A2

Niles falls to Three Rivers 2-1 in regional semifinal

B1

6 54708 09550 1

FRANKLY

TIPS, QUIPS, AND BLIPS

What is Frankly? It is where readers sound off on issues of the day. Have a tip, quip or blip? Call or text Frankly at 219-455-2349 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com

Time to remove the pardon abilities for the President. ALL of these people Trump pardoned are criminals & fraudsters. So much for the law & order President.

If you commit fraud for $30 million and happen to be a reality TV star, apparently it's ok. Apparently you were railroaded. Apparently you just need to wear a MAGA hat and bow to the king.

Trump actually reposted that Biden was executed in 2020 and that he has been replaced by a robotic clone. Yes, the President of the United States of America is posting these things.

Why should people living illegally in this country get free healthcare? I understand that as human beings they have certain rights, but providing long-term benefits with no documentation is criminal in itself.

Why go through the hard work of trimming waste in government spending only to give millionaires tax cuts? In the end, Americans who lost their government jobs just had their paychecks handed to people like Bezos, Gates, Zuckerberg and Elon Musk.

If we put 1/20 th of our defense budget into cancer research, we'd have a cure by now.

Taco Tuesday at the White House this summer.

Maybe democrats should be a little more concerned about the foreign gang members living in their neighborhoods than whether or not Trump is accepting a jet for our country.

Don't take politicians at their word as if they truly know what the heck they are doing. Most live in a fantasy world and are in office for prestige only, not for getting their hands dirty and doing actual work.

There couldn't be a better time for an Independent third party to take hold that represents the majority of Americans.

Neither the far right Trumpers nor far left Progressive stand for American values. They both seem to be embolden by criminal behavior.

WEATHER

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Partly Cloudy	50% Chance of Storms	30% Chance of Storms	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Sunny
75° 60°	76° 57°	77° 56°	73° 53°	76° 63°	81° 66°

ANNUAL BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL RETURNS TO NILES

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The sounds of string instruments filled the air around the amphitheater at Riverfront Park as day two of the 23rd annual Niles Bluegrass festival got underway Thursday afternoon.

Organized by the Riverfront Optimist Club, the festival, which ends Sunday, June 8, features several popular bluegrass and Americana acts, food and beverage vendors and carnival attractions.

Below is the remaining festival lineup:

Saturday, June 7
Noon – Brandywine Creek String Band
1 p.m. – Open mic featuring Ben Ja.m. In
2 p.m. – Blue Holler Trio
2:50 p.m. – New Valley Grass
3:40 p.m. – Ben Balos
4:30 p.m. – Blue Holler Trio
5:20 p.m. – New Valley Grass
6:10 p.m. – Brian Oberlin of Full Cord
7 p.m. – Rebecca Frazier
9 p.m. – Niles Bluegrass Band
10 p.m. – Stage closes

Sunday, June 8
11 a.m. – Sunday Service & Music with Spero House and Friends
1:20 p.m. – Deadwood
2:10 p.m. – PScott & the Prairie Dogs
3:10 p.m. – Deadwood
4 p.m. – Daniel Cole Dailey
5 p.m. – PScott & The Prairie Dogs
6 p.m. – stage closes.

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Jim Judd 'SMC's Ted Lasso'

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — James Judd casts a towering shadow over Southwestern Michigan College wrestling — past and future.

"He was like Ted Lasso," his son, Todd, said. "It's nice to win, but he was more about developing good young men than winning and losing."

Lasso, a television character played by Jason Sudeikis, is an American college football coach hired to coach an English soccer team whose owner secretly hopes his inexperience will lead to failure. But Lasso's folksy, optimistic leadership proves surprisingly successful.

Judd was one of three original SMC coaches, along with Cross Country/Track Hall of Famer Ron Gunn and Jim Tansey, who played basketball for John Wooden at South Bend Central before the "Wizard of Westwood" won 10 NCAA national championships in 12 years with UCLA, including seven straight.

The Jims tossed a coin to decide Judd would also coach golf. His late brother, Ken, a professional golfer, was the teaching pro at the Lake Geneva, Wis., Playboy Club.

Judd developed Todd Hesson, SMC's current head coach, whose Roadrunners three-peated the Michigan Community College Athletic Association (MCCAA) championship and captured the 2025 Great Lakes District Championship in Illinois in the three years since the sport's revival after a 30-year absence.

In Council Bluffs, Iowa, March 8, Hesson was named National Wrestling Coaches Association Coach of the Year as the Roadrunners finished 14th in the NJCAA Division I. Sophomores Colby Klinger and Nathan Andrina were honored as All-Americans.

Hesson, Great Lakes District Wrestling Coach of the Year, is only SMC's second coach. Judd started the program in 1968 and continued until its 1992 elimination.

Judd spent 38 years with the college, continuing to teach physical education until 2006.

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Jim Judd.

Judd's Studs

"Judd's Stud's" were known for wearing colorful singlets and for classroom success.

"Those shirts were so popular" among all the athletes, Todd, himself a retired 32-year physical education teacher and coach, recalled. "Wrestlers, basketball players, cross-country runners, we all hung out together. They all wanted Judd's Studs shirts. My dad would tell them, 'Pick out a wrestler. If you can take them down, I'll give you a T-shirt,' — but no one ever could."

Todd, red-shirted one year, was at SMC from 1982-85. The third generation of Judds was here in Todd's son, Gavin, the inspiration for a semi-professional soccer league Judd planned to launch.

"My dad had a big influence on him, too," Todd said. "He wants to teach and coach. Matter of fact, during break in Florida he's going to parachute out of an airplane."

When SMC dropped wrestling in 1992, Grand Rapids Junior College and Muskegon Community College were the only comparable opponents remaining. Grapplers often competed against four-year universities.

Travel expense was more than student participation justified. The 1991-92 program had 10 students — not enough to fill the weight-class quota.

More than 150 of Judd's former wrestlers went on to four-year colleges and universities.

Nine former Roadrunners served as coaches in the immediate area, including John Johnson and John Green, Judd's SMC assistants.

His 1972-73 team received an NJCAA award for its number of academic All-Americans.

Hesson continues to emphasize academics. In 2024, National Wrestling Coaches Association released its awards for NJCAA Scholar All-Americans, including five Roadrunners, Nathan Andrina, Hector Garcia, Hunter Heath, Colby Klinger and Vinny Patierno.

Coach Judd was named to the NJCAA Wrestling Hall of Fame in Stillwater, Okla., in 1990.

Before SMC he taught and coached football, baseball and track with the Spencerville Public School System; Ottawa-Glandorf; and Otsego Schools, all in Ohio.

Coach Judd, who passed away on Christmas Eve 2021 at 83, was born Dec. 29, 1937, in North Baltimore, Ohio, to Kenneth and Elsie (Nigh) Judd. He graduated from North Baltimore High School in 1956.

"My grandfather, my uncle and dad are all in the North Baltimore Sports Hall of Fame," Todd said.

Army paratrooper and 'Honest John'

Following high school, Judd enlisted in the U.S. Army and served from 1956 until 1960 as a paratrooper, making more than 50 jumps.

Judd, who spent three years in Germany, was one of eight men commonly referred to as the "Honest Johns," entrusted to guard atomic bombs.

Once honorably discharged, Judd continued his education by earning a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Findlay University and a master's degree in physical education from Bowling Green University.

"I also became an actor by chance at Findlay," Judd said. "I took a couple of classes in play production and drama. Ironically, I pulled a prank that got me in hot water. We were building a set for 'The Postman Always Rings Twice.' We were up in the attic of the main building, 'Old Main,' looking for stuff for props and came across a big 1930s banner. We got the bright idea to hang it back up, which made the front page of the Findlay Republican-Courier and the Toledo Blade: 'How the heck did it get up there? How are we going to get it down?' Luckily, the president was a retired colonel and I was an ex-paratrooper. He kind of liked me, so I got off with a lecture."

As an actor, "I played Inspector Hearne in 'Witness for the Prosecution' " by Agatha Christie.

"The whole football team came and sat in front opening night," Judd said.

Todd Hesson and Todd Judd grew up in the same Dowagiac neighborhood before Hesson moved to Decatur, then Niles. Both Todds and Judd's brother attended Findlay.

"He's quiet and laid back, but Todd's done a nice job. He has a lot of my dad in him as far as coaching philosophies," he said of Hesson.

Todd's brother, James C. Judd, worked for the Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School, which closed in 2011. Now he inspects housing situations and children's welfare for the state.

Encouraging well-roundedness

"He encouraged my brother and I to do different things to be well-rounded," Todd said. "I was a thespian, too," with Keith Cooper's Union High Drama Club. "My brother could play piano well and was giving lessons on the side to make money. I was in 'Fiddler on the Roof,' 'The King and I,' 'Li'l Abner.' Small parts, built sets and ran lights. (Wrestling Coach John) Lewis made me to run to Drama Club practice."

'Football was my main sport'

Football "was my main sport," said Coach Judd, who also played baseball and basketball. His high school lacked wrestling.

"I was exposed to wrestling at Findlay, which had a good program with guys coming out of Cleveland and western Pennsylvania."

Judd's coach, Jim Young, guided the University of Arizona (1973-1976), Purdue University (1977-1981) and the U.S. Military Academy (1983-1990) before induction into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1999.

Young was interim coach for the Michigan Wolverines during the 1970 Rose Bowl after a heart attack hospitalized Bo Schembechler.

Couple contributed 50 years to SMC

It's coincidence that creation of a $5,000 Bea and Jim Judd Endowment for wrestlers coincided with SMC's 2014 50th anniversary, but 50 happened to be how many years the Dowagiac couple contributed.

On June 11, 1961, before Jim's senior year of college, he married Beulah "Bea" Carpenter, his wife of 53 years. She died July 8, 2014, at 74, retired from the financial aid office after 12 years.

Her stepfather established his own company in North Baltimore, between Bowling Green and Findlay and 30 miles south of Toledo in northwestern Ohio.

She volunteered with Borgess-Lee Memorial Hospital Auxiliary's gift shop and worked for the John Scott insurance agency. She worked as a secretary for Cooper Tire in Findlay.

Bea, a coal miner's daughter from Kentucky, loved spoiling her family with Amish-style chicken and dumplings.

Mrs. Judd attended high school in Lima with Gary Moeller, University of Michigan's head football coach in the early 1990s.

Early in his career, Judd established a close friendship with Chris Taylor, Dowagiac's 1972 Olympic wrestler for whom the Chieftains' football field is named. Taylor might have wrestled for SMC rather than Muskegon Community College had the program been established earlier.

After Taylor's death, Judd inaugurated the Chris Taylor Open, which annually attracted hundreds of high school wrestlers.

Judd also served four years on Dowagiac City Council.

Cirque Mechanics returns to the LMC Mendel Center

COMMUNITY REPORT

BENTON HARBOR — Gravity-defying acrobatics meet theatrical ingenuity when Cirque Mechanics returns to the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center with their spectacular new production.

At 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25, the Mendel Center Jenkins Theatre audience will be transported into the whimsical world of "Tilt! A Circus Thrill Ride" – a celebration of mechanical marvels and human artistry that reimagines the thrills and wonder of an amusement park.

InTilt!, Cirque Mechanics takes the audience on a journey to the backlot of their inventive theme park, where in the shadow of the roller coaster and under the lights of the Ferris wheel, you'll meet the operators, carnies,

See CIRQUE, Page A7

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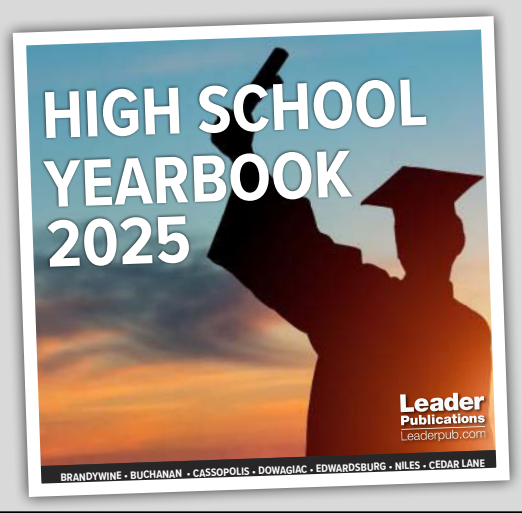
HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK 2025
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In today's newspaper you will find the High School Yearbook 2025. Leader Publications made the decision to rerun this piece after learning that several graduate's names were inadvertently absent on the master files provided to our newspaper. Copies will also be available at our office at 25 N. Second St. in Niles as well as our Dowagiac office located inside the train depot at 200 Depot Drive. Each high school will also receive copies.

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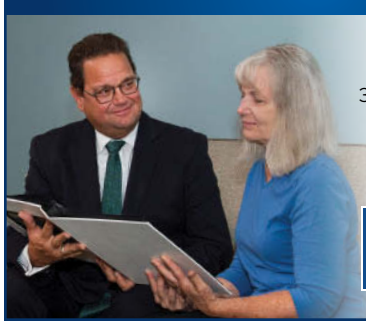
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South Bend man gets prison time for fleeing with stolen motorcycle

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications Contributor

NILES — A South Bend man who stole a motorcycle and then fled from police last August was sentenced to prison Friday, May 30 in sentencings in Berrien County Trial Court at the Niles courthouse.

Tomas Herrera Biers, 44, of South Bend, pleaded guilty to third degree fleeing and eluding police, receiving, concealing or possession of a stolen motor vehicle and resisting and obstructing police and was sentenced to concurrent terms of 18 months to five years, 18 months to two years and 24 months to five years. He has credit for 20 days served and must pay $394 in fines and costs.

Biers

The incident occurred Aug. 2, 2024 in Niles. Biers stole a motorcycle and then fled from police, going up to 70 miles per hour on city streets.

Assistant Prosecutor Myrene Koch said that Biers' actions posed a very serious risk to the community not only because of the high speeds but also because a firearm fell out of a saddlebag on the motorcycle. A member of the public found the weapon and turned it over to police.

Defense attorney Dan French agreed that it was a dangerous situation for everyone involved.

For his part, Biers said that he had not realized there was a weapon in the saddlebag. He said he fled because he was scared. "I made a mistake, I should never had gotten on the bike," he said. "I ask for any sentence besides prison. I'm on the straight and narrow now. This was a mistake that will never happen again."

"Some people can afford to make mistakes but with your history you can't do that," Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein said. "The guidelines leave me no choice. I don't find any substantial or compelling reason to deviate above or below the guidelines."

Two other area residents received jail sentences Friday.

Taylor Scott Sartin, 32, of Mishawaka, pleaded guilty to use of meth, possession of a firearm by a prohibited person and possession of analogues and was sentenced to concurrent terms of 270 days in jail. He has credit for 70 days served and must pay $316 in fines and costs.

Sartin

The incident occurred March 22.

Sartin's attorney said Sartin had alcohol and meth addictions and had fallen off the wagon. He said Sartin is trying to get himself sober and get more intensive treatment.

Judge Hosbein noted that Sartin was on probation at the time of the offense and questioned why he hadn't asked for help from his probation officer. "The fact that you were on probation makes it inappropriate for me to put you back on probation," he said.

Vada Jolyn Wadsworth, 25, of Niles, pleaded guilty to domestic violence, use of meth, breaking and entering-illegal entry and attempted resisting and obstructing police and was sentenced to 365 days in jail with credit for 96 days served. She must pay a total of $425 in fines and costs.

Wadsworth

The incidents occurred Nov. 1 and Dec. 31 in Niles.

Wadsworth's mother spoke before the sentencing and said she was scared of the path her daughter is going down and the safety of Wadsworth's child.

French said Wadsworth regrets her actions. "The common thread is meth, she has had periods of sobriety," he said. "I'm not sure that straight jail is the answer."

Judge Hosbein said that the charges were serious and that Wadsworth had had the benefit of felony charges being reduced to misdemeanors. "I'm not sure what is going to get through to you," he said. "You've been on probation before and you have pending charges."

"You're 25 years old and your history goes back to when you were a juvenile," the judge added. "You've been given services. You did well on probation but then you went back to the same behaviors and it's escalated. You're stealing from homes and resisting police. I don't know what else we can do for you."

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Comcast expands high-speed internet network in Cass County

COMMUNITY REPORT

CASS COUNTY — Comcast has announced the extension of its next-generation network in Cass County.

The expansion brings Comcast's full suite of Xfinity residential services, including Internet speeds faster than a gigabit, to more than 850 homes in Pokagon and Silver Creek Townships, including homes surrounding the Sister Lakes.

"Comcast is proud to expand its network once again in southwest Michigan," said Chris Smith, Comcast's Regional Senior Vice President. "Through our full suite of Xfinity residential services, more residents in Cass County now have access to a network that delivers 99.9 percent reliability, increased Internet speeds and the capacity to accommodate the increasing number of connected devices in our customers' homes."

Comcast's most recent expansion in Cass County is part of the company's latest investment in southwest Michigan, following its recent network expansion in Berrien County. Overall, Comcast has invested more than $80 billion in the last ten years to grow and evolve its expansive fiber-rich network across the company's service footprint nationwide, including more than $880 million the company has invested in its network in Michigan over the last three years.

Comcast's more than 2,300 miles of fiber-rich network infrastructure across southwest Michigan allows the company to offer Internet speeds faster than a gigabit to residential and business customers in its service footprint. In addition, Comcast has more than 65,000 WiFi hotspots in southwest Michigan and more than 23 million nationwide.

Comcast's network is built to enable residents and businesses to thrive in today's connected world. Cass County joins the 64 million homes and businesses across the country to have access to a network that is trusted by essential community organizations like hospitals, schools, transportation systems and first responders. It delivers multi-gigabit Internet speeds, 99.9 percent reliability and security built in from the ground up to keep customers safe from cyber threats.

Comcast's residential services are marketed under the Xfinity and NOW brands and consumers in the company's Cass County footprint can

See COMCAST, Page A6

Buchanan man gets prison time for criminal sexual conduct

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications Contributor

NILES — A former Buchanan High School janitor was sentenced to prison in Berrien County Trial Court for criminal sexual conduct against an underage girl earlier this year.

Jameson Nickolas DeCarlo, 24, of Buchanan, pleaded guilty to third-degree criminal sexual conduct and was sentenced to 35 months to 15 years in prison with credit for 123 days served. He must register as a sex offender and must pay $258 in fines and costs.

DeCarlo

The incident occurred Jan. 29 against a 15 year old girl at a location in Buchanan. DeCarlo worked as a janitor at the high school for several months in 2024.

Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Myrene Koch noted that the victim was 15 at the time of the incident and said she sent pictures of herself unclothed to DeCarlo. Koch pointed out that DeCarlo could have faced additional charges of distribution of child sexually abusive materials and accosting a minor.

Defense attorney Carri Briseno said DeCarlo had had time to reflect on his actions. "He has had time to reflect and accept responsibility for his actions," she said. "He pleaded guilty as charged and didn't ask for a reduction. He plans to use his time in prison to reflect on his life, continue his education and get counseling."

Briseno asked for a sentence at the bottom of the sentencing guidelines. The guidelines, which are advisory and not mandatory, called for a sentence of between 21 months and 35 months.

"I want to apologize to the victim and to the court," DeCarlo said. "If I could, I would go back and change what I did but I have to live with the consequences."

Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein noted the age of the victim and the fact that DeCarlo was an employee of the high school. He said that he believed that a sentence at the top of the guidelines was a proportionate sentence.

A Stevensville woman involved in the robbery of JD's Truck Stop last December was sentenced to probation. Her co-defendant, Todd Forker, Jr., was not sentenced as he refused to be transported from the jail to the Niles courthouse Monday.

Gina Lee Stevens, 50, of Stevensville pleaded guilty to unarmed robbery and was sentenced to two years probation, credit for three days served, 100 hours of community service, $678 in fines and costs and $469.64 restitution.

Stevens

The incident occurred in the early morning hours of Dec. 21 at JD's Truck Stop off of U.S. 12 in Bertrand Township. Stevens did not go into the building but drove the getaway car.

Judge Hosbein said he ordered an extra 60 hours of community service above the 40 hours of community service originally recommended instead of giving Stevens 60 days in jail. "I can always impose jail time later," he said. "Since she is engaged in rehabilitation and is sober, I don't want to set her back."

Defense attorney Kaitlin Locke said that Stevens hasn't used drugs since the time of the incident, has taken substance abuse classes, undergone counseling and has had no issues while out on bond. Stevens has written a letter of apology to the store clerk who was robbed.

Locke said that Stevens got addicted to heroin after she had started taking medical marijuana to ease her pain. "She was given heroin in 2022 and was immediately hooked," Locke said. "She did this because she needed money to feed her addiction. There is no excuse for what she did and she knows it was wrong."

"This is not normal behavior for her," Locke added. "Now that she is sober, she feels completely different. I'm asking you to allow her to remain out of jail or hold it in abeyance so she can continue to prove she deserves a second chance."

Stevens said she took full responsibility and accountability for her actions. "I hate myself for what happened, I never wanted her (the clerk) to have to go through this," she said. "I'm sorry, I want to continue to get better, I absolutely hate and despite drugs. I wish my pain didn't exist."

Judge Hosbein said that while Forker actually committed the robbery, Stevens had a role in the situation by driving the car. "I'm glad that you're sober, I hope you keep that up," he said.

In other sentencings:

• Michael Joshua Aperans, 35, of Indiana, pleaded guilty to receiving, concealing or possession of stolen property over $1,000 and under $20,000 and was sentenced to two years probation, 365 days in jail with credit for eight days served and $798 in fines and costs. The jail term was held in abeyance until the end of the probation and could be suspended. The incident occurred Dec. 30, 2024 in Niles where he and other man stole a furnace from a vacant home.

Aperans

• Caden Riley Paul, of Ohio, pleaded guilty to possession of a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle and was sentenced to 18 months probation under the Holmes Youthful Training Act, credit for two days served, 50 hours of community service and $618 in fines and costs. The incident occurred Jan. 16 in Galien.

Terry

• Robert Vannell Terry III, 31, of Indiana, pleaded guilty to possession of a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle and was sentenced to credit for 52 days served and $258 in fines and costs. The incident occurred Feb. 4 on the U.S. 31 freeway.

Word

• Madison Lynn Word, of Niles, pleaded guilty to tampering with a tether device and was sentenced to 12 months probation, credit for three days served, $690 restitution for the cut tether and $658 in fines and costs. The incident occurred in October, 2022 in Niles.

Niles Daily Star

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COMICS & PUZZLES

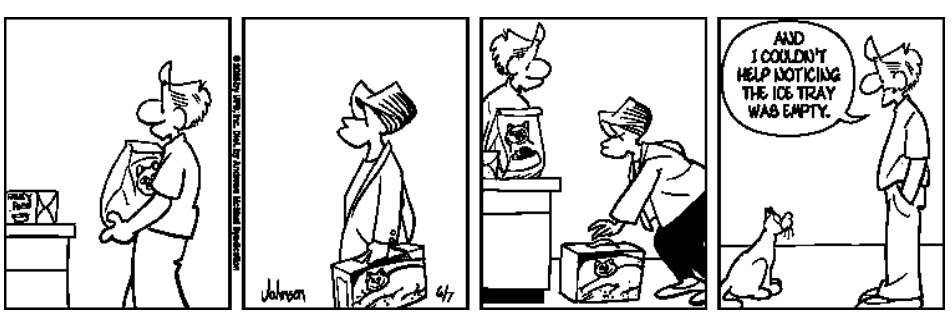
ADAM

FINALLY, THIS NEXT SONG IS "WIND BENEATH MY WINGS."
BRAP BRAP BRAPPA BRAP BRA-BRAP BRAP BRAAAP BRAP
SO... MOVING. JUST... AMAZING.
NOW PAY UP.
THANK YOU. THERE WILL BE NO ENCORE.

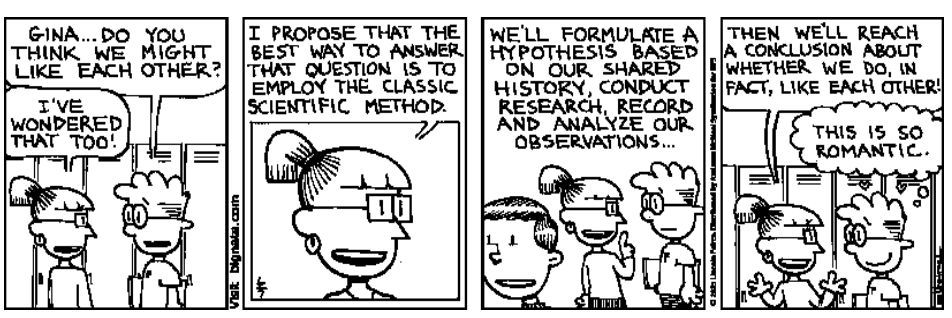
ALLEY OOP

LOOK AT US! WE DEFEATED THE SPHINX!
I FEEL KIND OF BAD, THOUGH. SHE SEEMED PRETTY UPSET WITH HERSELF.
OH, SHE'LL BE FINE.
YOU SAID WE SHOULD START CALLING HER THE "STINX."
EH, MYTHICAL CREATURES ARE TOO SENSITIVE THESE DAYS.
YOU GAVE HER A BOOK OF RIDDLES FOR CHILDREN AND TOLD HER TO STUDY UP.
FINE! I'LL GO APOLOGIZE!
DON'T FORGET, YOU SAID HER WINGS LOOKED WEIRD!

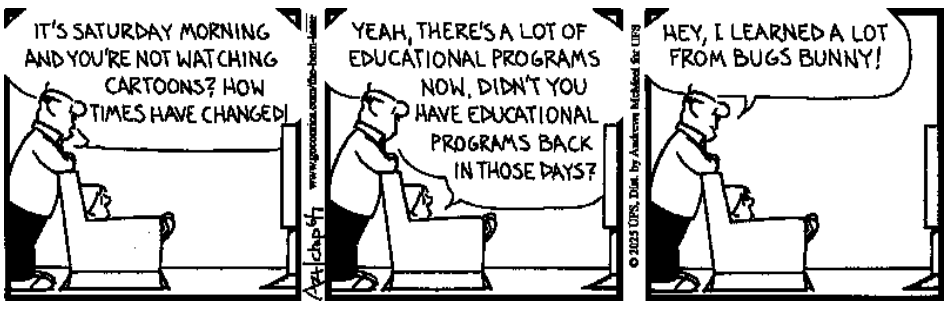
ARLO & JANIS



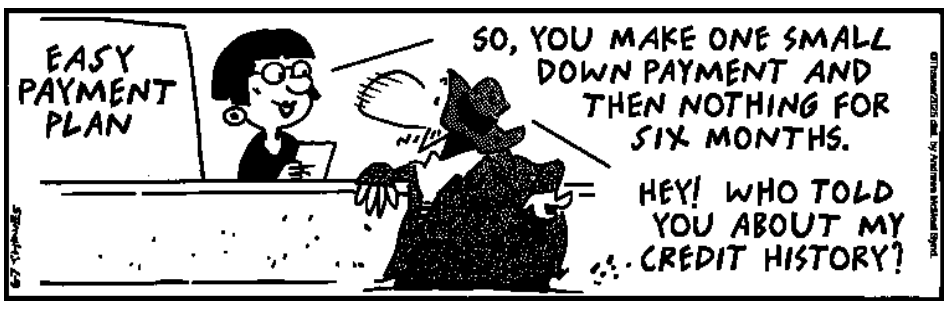
BIG NATE


GINA... DO YOU THINK WE MIGHT LIKE EACH OTHER?
I'VE WONDERED THAT TOO!
I PROPOSE THAT THE BEST WAY TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION IS TO EMPLOY THE CLASSIC SCIENTIFIC METHOD.
WE'LL FORMULATE A HYPOTHESIS BASED ON OUR SHARED HISTORY, CONDUCT RESEARCH, RECORD AND ANALYZE OUR OBSERVATIONS...
THEN WE'LL REACH A CONCLUSION ABOUT WHETHER WE DO, IN FACT, LIKE EACH OTHER!
THIS IS SO ROMANTIC.

BORN LOSER


IT'S SATURDAY MORNING AND YOU'RE NOT WATCHING CARTOONS? HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED!
YEAH, THERE'S A LOT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS NOW, DIDN'T YOU HAVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS BACK IN THOSE DAYS?
HEY, I LEARNED A LOT FROM BUGS BUNNY!

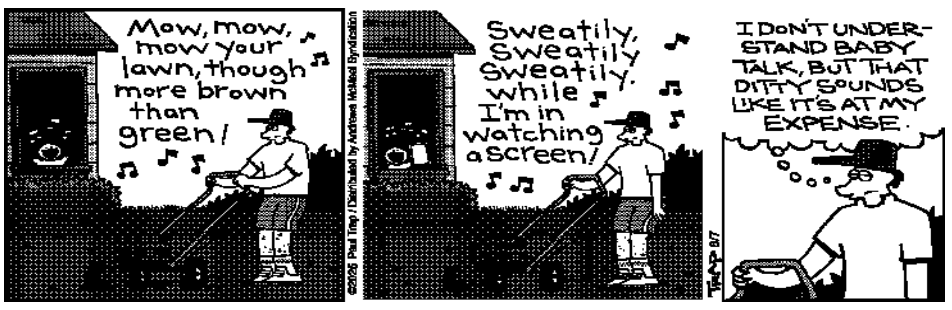
FRANK & ERNEST


EASY PAYMENT PLAN
SO, YOU MAKE ONE SMALL DOWN PAYMENT AND THEN NOTHING FOR SIX MONTHS.
HEY! WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT MY CREDIT HISTORY?

GRIZZWELLS

WHEN I'M AT SCIENCE CAMP IMPROVING MY MIND, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA BE DOING?
I'M GONNA BE CONDUCTING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INTO THE EFFECTS...
...OF SLEEPING LATE, LIVING ON A BOBA DIET, FACETIMING FRIENDS AND ONLINE SHOPPING ON ADOLESCENT GIRLS
THINK I CAN GET A GRANT?

THATABABY


Mow, mow, mow your lawn, though more brown than green!
Sweatily, Sweatily Sweatily, while I'm in watching a screen!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND BABY TALK, BUT THAT DITTY SOUNDS LIKE IT'S AT MY EXPENSE.

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SODOKU PUZZLE

HOW TO PLAY: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

DIFFICULTY RATING: 5/5

ANSWER ON PAGE 6

2				8	3	5	6	
				9		8	1	2
		9				3		
					6			
1	6						2	8
			3					
		4				9		
3	9	8		1				
	2	1	8	4				3

MODERATELY CONFUSED

MOST PEOPLE DON'T THINK I'M AS OLD AS I AM UNTIL THEY HEAR ME STAND UP.
STAHLER.
6/7
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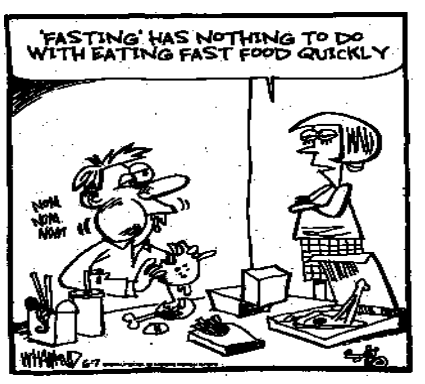
REALITY CHECK

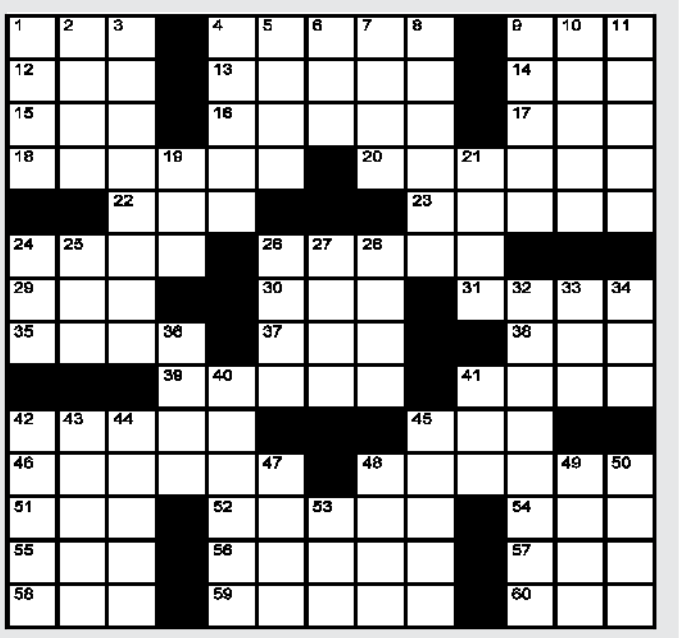


CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS
1 Means to an —
4 Rescued
9 Scottish cap
12 Movie set VIP (Abbr.)
13 "— — Lucy"
14 — — loss for words
15 Hosp. area
16 Bring down
17 Calendar abbr.
18 Place of worship
20 Wavelet
22 Youngster
23 Distributed cards
24 Raced
26 Roll with a hole
29 Nest-egg letters
30 Actress — Lupino
31 "Let — eat cake"
35 The two together
37 Gratuity
38 Sailor's assent
39 Helps to do wrong
41 Worry
42 Walk at a leisurely pace
45 Mother
46 Steal
48 Insect antenna
51 Literary collection
52 Complete
54 — de cologne
55 Food fish
56 Baggy
57 Away from NNW
58 Before
59 Chew the scenery
60 Rds.

DOWN
1 Correction to a text
2 Agreeable
3 Repetitive sound
4 Inane
5 Succulent plant
6 Promise
7 "What — Happened to Baby Jane?"
8 Ridicule
9 City in Florida
10 Island
11 French painter
19 Seed case
21 Hit again and again
24 Bro or sis
25 — bono
26 Mouthful
27 Entrance to a mine
28 Openings
32 Perfectly safe
33 Spud bud
34 Came upon
36 Sports period
40 Ladybug
41 Enemy
42 With much speed
43 Asia —
44 Bit of grass
45 Confused fight
47 Chamber
48 Eat no food
49 Bridge position
50 Regrets
53 In addition

ANSWER ON PAGE 6



6-7

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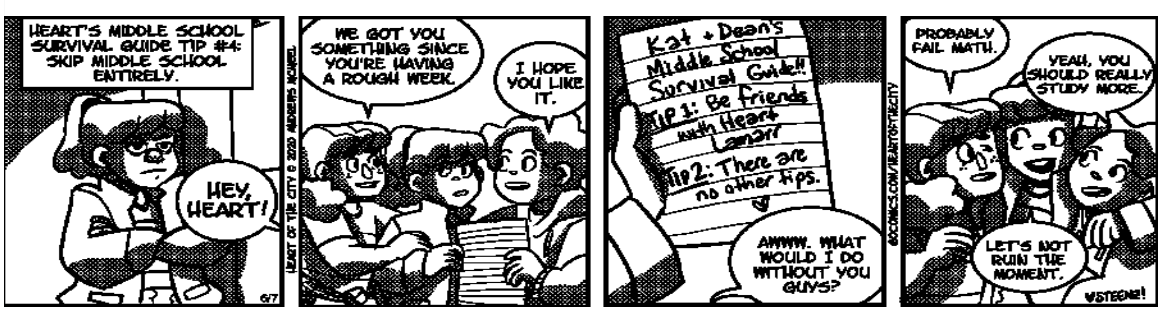
BREVITY

HEART OF THE CITY


HEART'S MIDDLE SCHOOL SURVIVAL GUIDE TIP #4: SKIP MIDDLE SCHOOL ENTIRELY.
HEY, HEART!
WE GOT YOU SOMETHING SINCE YOU'RE HAVING A ROUGH WEEK.
I HOPE YOU LIKE IT.
Kat + Dean's Middle School Survival Guide!!
Tip 1: Be friends with Heart Lamar
Tip 2: There are no other tips.
AWWW. WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT YOU GUYS?
PROBABLY FAIL MATH.
YEAH, YOU SHOULD REALLY STUDY MORE.
LET'S NOT RUIN THE MOMENT.

DEATH NOTICES

Otto Dean Krueger, 81, passed away on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, in Elkhart, Indiana. Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Frederick Kirk Smith, 69, of Cassopolis, passed away on Thursday, May 29, 2025. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, of Niles. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com

James Smock, 64, of Niles, passed away Thursday, May 29, 2025. Arrangements are currently pending and have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com

Robert Eugene Leet, 77, passed away on Thursday, May 29, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Elwood Dye, 90, of Niles passed Thursday, May 29, 2025. Visitation will be Tuesday June 3, 2025 5-7 p.m., with service Wednesday, at 11 a.m. both at Brown Funeral Home.

Vickie Martin, 70, of Berrien Springs, passed away Thursday, May 29, 2025 at Northwest Health Porter in Valparaiso, Indiana. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Allred Funeral Home.

Rosemary Kaiser, 90, passed away on Saturday, May 31, 2025, in Fennville, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Karen Robinson, 83, passed away on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Services on June 12, 2025, at 11:00am at Brown Funeral Home. Arrangements entrusted to Brown Funeral Home.

Jeannette Marie Thornton, 101, passed away on Monday, June 2, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Visitation, June 11, 2025, from 5:00pm-7:00pm at Brown Funeral Home. Arrangements entrusted to Brown Funeral Home.

Louis A. Spletzer, 96, of Berrien Springs, passed June 4, 2025. Private services will be held at Rosehill Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Allred Funeral Home, Berrien Springs. wwwAllredFuneralHome.com.

OBITUARIES

RaeAnn Clark

July 15, 1945 - May 24, 2025

RaeAnn Clark,79, of Buchanan, passed away at home, Saturday, May 24, 2025. Her life began July 15, 1945 in Niles, born to Joe and Louise McBain. She married Lloyd Clark, in Ocean Springs, Mississippi in 1977, he preceded her in death December, 2024.

RaeAnn loved spending time with her family, especially caring for her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

RaeAnn will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by two sons, David (Mary) Clark of Buchanan, Christopher Clark of Buchanan; two grandchildren, Shelby Hall, Jack Clark; three great grandchildren, Hunter, Dustin, Paisley and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her beloved husband; and her brother, Dale McBain.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

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(North of US-12 on West River Road)
MOWER * GARAGE ITEMS: Troy-Bilt 17.5 H.P. Riding Mower w/Rear Bagger; Wheel Barrel; Yard Cart. FURNITURE * COLLECTIBLES * ART WORK: Dining Room Table; China Hutch; Breakfast Table w/Chairs; Black Rattan Furniture; Beds; Dressers; Assortment of Paintings; Artwork; Misc. Items.
REAL ESTATE offered at 12:00 Noon: 3 Bedroom 2-1/2 Bath Brick Ranch Home, Fireplace, City Water & Sewer, Heated 2 Car Garage, Separate Tool Building, Call for Terms.
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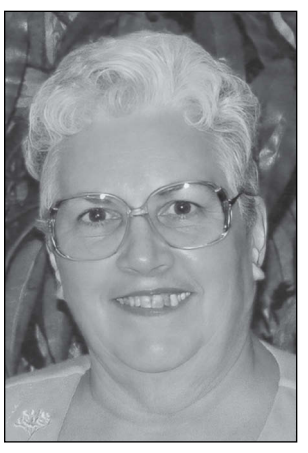

Mary Ann Everman

September 11, 1937 - May 31, 2025

Mary Ann Everman, 87, of Dowagiac, passed away on Saturday evening, May 31, 2025, at Corewell Health Niles Hospital in Niles, MI, following a battle with Alzheimer's for several years.

She was born on September 11, 1937, in Niles, MI, the daughter of the late Frank and Louise (Bame) Leach. On November 7th, 1959, she was married to Marion "Keith" Everman in Niles.

Surviving are her two children - Pamela (Don Haley) Everman and Scott (Deb Hunsberger) Everman; two grandchildren - Sarah McGrew and Amber Turnbow; seven great-grandchildren; Ethin, Kristin, Kayla, Amya, Robert Jr, Kamron and Brayden.

Preceding her in death were her husband of 64 years, Keith Everman; parents; brother - Dick Leach; and favorite granddaughter, Ashley Turnbow.

A service to celebrate Mary's life will be held at 11:00 AM on Monday, June 9, 2025, at Clark Chapel - Starks Family Funeral Home, 405 Center St, Dowagiac, where friends may visit with Mary's family from 10:00 AM until the time of service. Inurnment will follow in South Wayne Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be directed to Cass County Medical Care Facility. To share a memory or message of condolence, please visit Mary's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

Kevin G Richardson

June 15, 1959 - January 14, 2025

Kevin Gregg Richardson, 65, of Cassopolis, died Tuesday, January 14, 2025.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, June 14, 2025 from 12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for a Rock and Roll Memorial at 63155 Dailey Road, Cassopolis,

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message and read the full obituary online: wagnercares.com.

Ann Flora

July 28, 1943 - June 4, 2025

Ann Marie (Allerton) Flora was born in Battle Creek, Michigan on July 28, 1943, to

Violet (Squires) and Gary Allerton. She spent her early childhood in Battle Creek. At the age of 11 she moved to Dowagiac, Michigan, which became her hometown. Ann graduated from Dowagiac Union High School in 1961 and attended Central Michigan University. On July 5, 1963, she married Richard Flora. They made their home in Niles, Michigan. Together Ann and Richard had 3 children: Andrew, Eric (Jennifer Walker-Flora), and Susan (Christopher) Freehan. They were blessed with 4 grandchildren: Caitlin Flora (Jake Kustasz), Natalie Marie (Camden) Oslund, Andrew Freehan, and Julia Flora.

Ann earned many college degrees, an associate's degree from Lake Michigan College, a bachelor's degree in secondary education with an emphasis on U.S. History and Geography, and a master's degree in education from Indiana University South Bend. She also earned certificates in Library Science. Ann worked for Niles Community Schools, Christ the King Catholic School in Roseland, Indiana, Niles District Library, and J.C. Penney in both Niles and Mishawaka, Indiana.

Ann's first love was history and genealogy. She was the local history librarian at Niles District Library for many years. As Local History Librarian, she hosted many workshops. Ann was a member of VanBuren Regional Genealogical Society and researched her family tree. She was a direct descendant of The Mayflower, of which she was very proud. She was also a member of The Daughters of the American Revolution and Friends of Silverbrook Cemetery.

While her children were growing up, Ann was active on committees involving her children's activities. She loved to crochet and made sure everyone had handmade stockings, Christmas tree skirts and afghans. Ann was an avid reader; her favorite genres were mysteries and historical fiction. Her favorite holiday was Halloween. She made sure that the kids always had the best costumes, even if she was up until 3 AM sewing the night before the Halloween party at school and trick-or-treating!

Above all else, family meant everything to Ann. She and Richard never missed a family gathering with extended family, and she loved to go to family reunions. Ann and Richard would travel to see the grandchildren perform in choir, musicals, dance recitals and band concerts. They attended every graduation celebration. The most important family holiday was Christmas. Ann enjoyed buying Hallmark ornaments and gifts. She was an expert at wrapping them with very intricate and beautiful bows she learned to make while an associate in the catalog department of J.C. Penney.

Ann passed away on June 4, 2025, in Niles, Michigan after a valiant battle with Alzheimer's and vascular dementia. She was predeceased by her husband of 60 years, her best friend, JoAnn (Clif) Gordon, her parents, her bonus parents Ray and Ann Allerton, brother Kenneth "Ivan" Slawson, and sisters Shirley Alvord and Jerilyn Gabos. She is survived by her children, grandchildren, sister Linda Finnerty, brothers, Richard and Stephen Schofield and many nieces and nephews.

A private service will be held. A Celebration of Life for Ann and Richard Flora will be held later. Memorial contributions may be made to Autism Support of Michigan (autism-mi.org) and Friends of Silverbrook Cemetery (friendsofsilverbrook.org). Arrangements have been entrusted to Clark Chapel - Starks Family Funeral Homes, Dowagiac. To share a memory or message of condolence, please visit Ann's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

Sherman Ross

January 13, 1973 - May 29, 2025

Sherman Ross, 53 of Cassopolis, died peacefully Thursday, May 29, 2025.

His life began January 13, 1973 in Chicago, Illinois the younger of two sons born to Carl and Sara Ross, Sr.

Sherman will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his parents, Carl and Sara Ross, Sr.; his brother, Carl Ross, Jr.; two nieces, Jada M. Ross, Alani M. Ross; and one nephew, Carl Ross III.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, June 7, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. until time of service at 11:00 a.m. in Ross Beatty High School, 22721 Diamond Cove Street, Cassopolis.

Sherman will be laid to rest in Calvin Center Cemetery in Cassopolis.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

COMCAST

Continued from page A4

take advantage of Xfinity's and NOW's full suite of products, including Internet, video, mobile, voice and home security. With multi-gigabit Internet speeds, powerful WiFi that reaches every corner of the home, and super-responsive connections with low lag available with its plan, customers have a great experience using their connected devices to stream their favorite sports and entertainment content, video chat with coworkers and friends, learn from home or simply surf the web.

Comcast's commitment to communities goes beyond building the network and aims to increase economic mobility for the local community and its residents. That's why Comcast created Internet Essentials, a broadband adoption program that offers eligible households low-cost, high-speed Internet and affordable computers. The program has helped 1.26 million Michigan residents connect to the Internet at home since it launched in 2011.

CROSSWORD ANSWER
From Page 5

E	N	D		S	A	V	E	D
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SUDOKU ANSWER
From Page 5

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Cassopolis to host Class of 1975 reunion July 19

COMMUNITY REPORT

CASSOPOLIS — The Cassopolis High School Class of 1975 will hold its 50th class reunion Saturday, July 19 at Marion Magnolia Farms, 7376 Twin Lakes Road, Cassopolis.

"We are hoping for a large turnout for our 50th," stated Charmin Ruth, chair of the reunion. "We already know that many are coming from as far as California, Florida and Boston, so we certainly hope the classmates that are still in the area will all come out to reconnect and celebrate together."

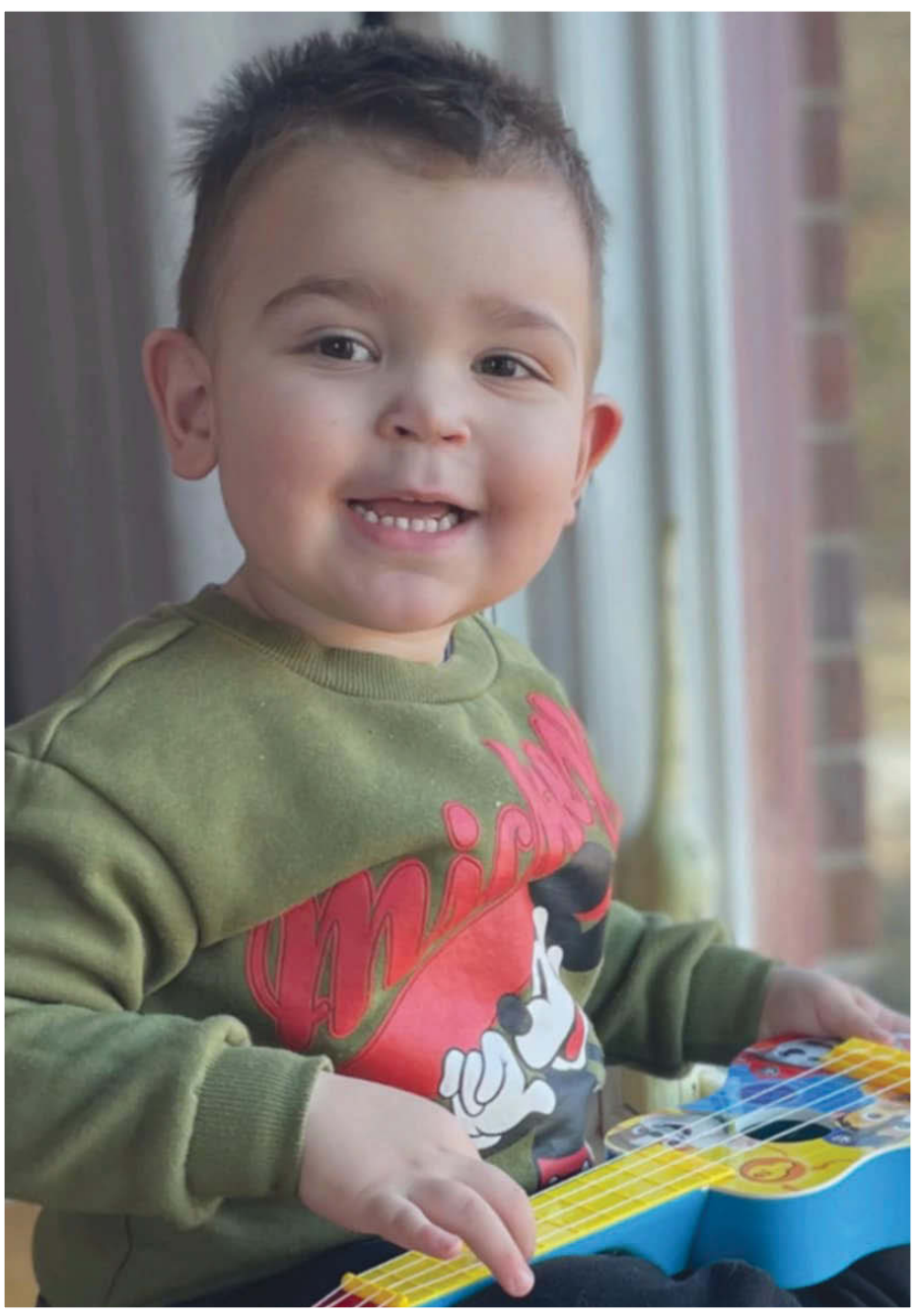
The 1974-75 varsity basketball team is the only team in school history to travel to the State finals, finishing second out of 177 Class C schools in the state. The team won the school's first-ever regional crown, then on to the quarter finals and an upset win over heavily favored Muskegon Western Michigan Christian. In the semi-finals, the team won in double overtime over Hamtramck St. Florian at the Lansing Civic Auditorium. They lost to Bay City All Saints at the state finals at Crisler Arena.

The team's leading scorer for the season was senior Roger Walters, averaging 25.7points per game. His 1,277 career points was the first to ever make over 1,000 career points at Cassopolis. Walters and Gary Young, a junior, were selected to the All-Blossomland Conference first team. Honorable mention went to forward Mark Scott, averaging 15 points per game, and guard Billy Dungey, averaging 10 points and 12 assists per game.

Members of the team included Glen Hawkins, Gary Young, George Hawthorne, Mark Scott, Charlie Wright, Roger Walters, Billy Dungey, Richard Lee, Harold Nelson, Kevin Loder, Ricky Evans, Reggie Scott and Joe Burmeister. Bob Follett was their coach.

The 50th Class reunion will start at 5 p.m. with a meal provided for $10 per person and a cash bar. You can just show up but reservations are appreciated by contacting Charmin Ruth at Chardan1112@gmail.com. There will also be a golf outing at the Diamond Lake Golf Club, contact the club for details and time.

BIRTHDAY ANNOUNCEMENT: MALLO



Jayde Mallo, of Niles, celebrated his birthday this week. Jayde was born June 4, 2023. "Happy 2nd birthday Jayde. We love you to the moon." - Papa and G Momma

CIRQUE

Continued from page A3

and characters that keep the rides running and the thrills coming.

Cirque Mechanics was founded in 2004 by Boston native and German Wheel artist, Chris Lashua, after the success of a collaborative project with the Circus Center of San Francisco entitled Birdhouse Factory. Cirque Mechanics quickly established itself as a premier American circus, with its unique approach to performance, inspiring storytelling, and innovative mechanical staging. Spectacle Magazine hailed it as "the greatest contribution to the American circus since Cirque du Soleil."

Cirque Mechanics, although inspired by modern circus, finds its roots in the mechanical and its heart in the stories of American ingenuity. The shows, rooted in realism, display a raw quality, rarely found in modern circus, that makes their message timeless and relevant. The stories are wrapped in circus acrobatics, mechanical wonders, and a bit of clowning around. The troupe has created six extraordinary productions; Birdhouse Factory, Boomtown, Pedal Punk, 42FT- A Menagerie of Mechanical Marvels, Zephyr, and now Tilt: A Circus Thrill Ride.

Tickets will be available to the public at www.TheMendelCenter.com/events beginning at 8 a.m. Friday, June 6.

In celebration of our community's love for the arts, generous underwriting from the Gast Young People's Performance Endowment and Premiere Partners allows the LMC Mendel Center to offer tickets starting at the special price of $10 plus service fee for this performance.

Cirque Mechanics: Tilt! A Circus Thrill Ride is part of the Mendel Center Discovery Series.

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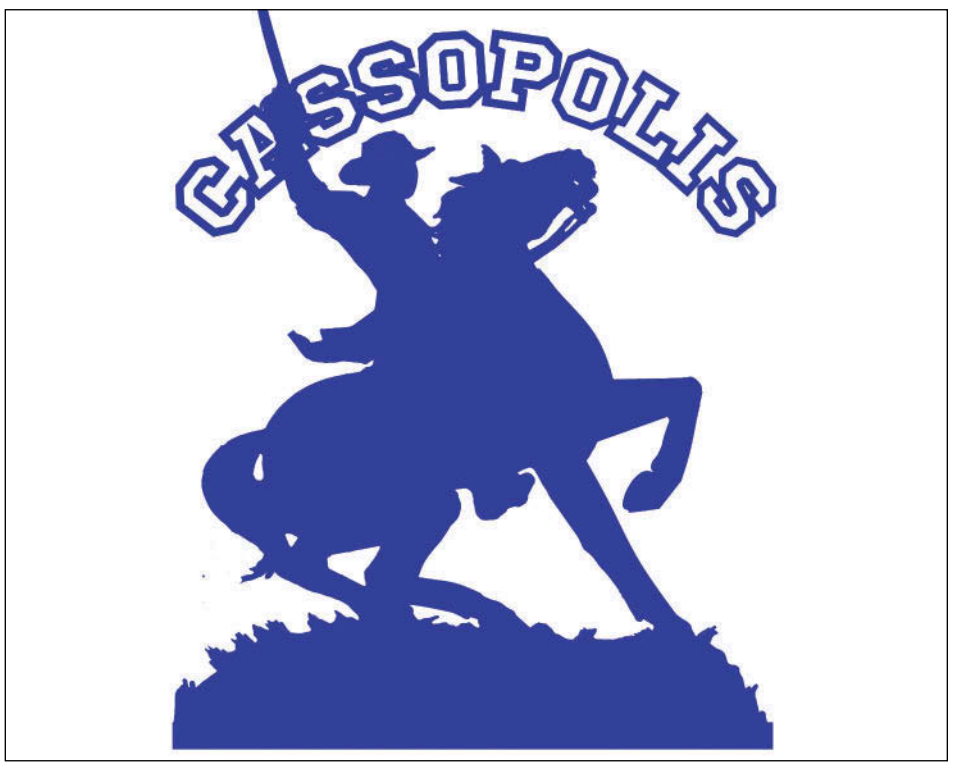

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Nine weddings and counting

Niles couple renews vows every five years

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Bill and Marie Weimer have been renewing their wedding vows every five years since they were married on June 26, 1985.

Later this month, the Niles couple will celebrate their 40th anniversary — and ninth renewal.

"He didn't say he's going to remarry me this year, so maybe he's tired of doing this every five years," Marie joked.

Marie first laid eyes on Bill at age 13 while ordering pizza from Pete's Patio, where Bill worked at the time. They would meet again several years later while volunteering at Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service. They got married at the old Niles City Hall (Chapin Mansion) and have been renewing their vows ever since.

Renewals have taken place at Huntly Church, Leasure Valley, old city chambers, Riverfront Park, on a John Deere Gator at a SMCAS picnic and at Hope Church.

The couple can be regularly found at Niles City Council meetings, of which Bill is a councilmember. Marie is a former member of the city's planning commission, among other things.

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Since they were married 40 years ago, the Weimers have renewed their vows every five years in various locations that are meaningful to them. This year marks their ninth ceremony.

PET OF THE WEEK

Animal Aid of Southwest Michigan has responded to numerous calls and has many litters of kittens/moms and rescue cases who needed medical care. Foster homes have them cared for and ready for adoption. For more information, visit www.animalaidswmi.org.

Vandalia resident injured in two-vehicle Calvin Township crash

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

CALVIN TOWNSHIP — A Vandalia resident was hospitalized following a two-vehicle crash Saturday morning in Calvin Township, according to the Cass County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Clint Roach reports that at approximately 1:20 p.m., deputies responded to a two-vehicle crash on Brownsville Road and Union Road in Calvin Township.

The investigation showed that a vehicle traveling eastbound on Brownsville Road driven by 55-year-old Gary Schlenther, of Niles, attempted to pass another vehicle, driven by 43-year-old Kelly Rodriguez, of Vandalia, who was making a left turn off of Brownsville. Rodriguez was transported by SMCAS Ambulance to Ascension Borges Lee Hospital for injuries sustained in the traffic crash.

Assisting agencies on scene were SMCAS Ambulance and Penn Township Fire Department.

VIKINGS

Continued from page A1

don't need anyone else to tell you that you're enough. You'll already know it and that in itself is the most powerful feeling of all."

"Dr. Seuss was rejected 27 times by book publishers, but went on to win numerous awards, including two Emmys for writing and animation," Young said. "Just because you were rejected, doesn't mean you can't succeed. Dr. Seuss captured it perfectly: 'why fit it in when you can stand it out?' Take that first step in your own direction. Strive to be yourself."

Talley closed her speech encouraging her fellow classmates to pay attention to what moves them.

"Pay attention to people who show up for you, even when it's inconvenient," Talley said. "Pay attention to the things that move your heart because the only thing more important than all of the things you'll achieve is what you care about while you're doing them. We don't need more perfect people. We need more honest ones."

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REJECTS

Continued from page A1

the death of Berrien County Road Department worker William "Mack" Isom on July 20, 2022. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a fine of up to $10,000.

The July 20, 2022 incident occurred on Red Bud Trail in Oronoko Township and took the life of Isom who was trimming tree branches in the roadway. The preliminary breathalyzer test (PBT) administered after the accident showed Johnson with a blood alcohol level of over .19 which is more than twice the legal limit.

The case has been delayed a number of times since the 2022 incident.

Previously, Johnson's attorneys had appealed a decision by Berrien County Trial Court Judge Jennifer Smith to exclude evidence about Isom's alleged negligence and using it as a defense at trial. That decision was appealed to the Michigan Court of Appeals and later the Michigan Supreme Court and resulted in both courts denying to hear the appeal.

Before the current appeal, the case had been set to go to trial last June when LaFond filed the most recent appeal with the Michigan Court of Appeals. LaFond appealed rulings by Judge Smith to not suppress two major pieces of evidence.

Oral arguments in the current appeal were held May 14 before a three judge panel. LaFond argued that the results of a preliminary breath test taken that day as well as a search of the "black box" from Johnson's car should be suppressed because Johnson wasn't read his rights.

Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Michael Murphy claimed that there was evidence to do the preliminary breath test because the responding police officer smelled alcohol on Johnson. He added that there was probable cause to search the "black box" from the car.

The three judge Court of Appeals panel ruled Tuesday that while they agreed with LaFond that case law equates reasonable cause to "probable cause", the police did have probable cause to administer the preliminary breath test given the totality of the circumstances.

"Defendant collided with a large tree, on a clear day, with no apparent visibility issues," the opinion stated. "The down tree was across both lanes of the road; safety cones were placed near the tree and work vehicles were parked nearby. A witness stated that defendant came 'flying' around the corner 'at a high rate of speed,' and was unable to stop in time to avoid hitting the decedent."

The panel also noted that the responding officer noted smelling an odor of intoxicants on Johnson and administered field sobriety tests which Johnson didn't "outright fail". Johnson also told police that "he could not see that the tree was down 'until the last second' despite its clear visibility."

As for the search of the car's "black box", the Court of Appeals ruled that LaFond was not alleging any judicial or police misconduct and that there was sufficient facts to suspect a crime had been committed. They noted that Judge Smith acknowledged that the affidavit to search the "black box" could have been better, but was supported by other evidence.

Niles Daily Star
Sports

GOT RESULTS?
max.harden@leaderpub.com

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SOFTBALL

Buchanan downs Brandywine, River Valley for district title

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

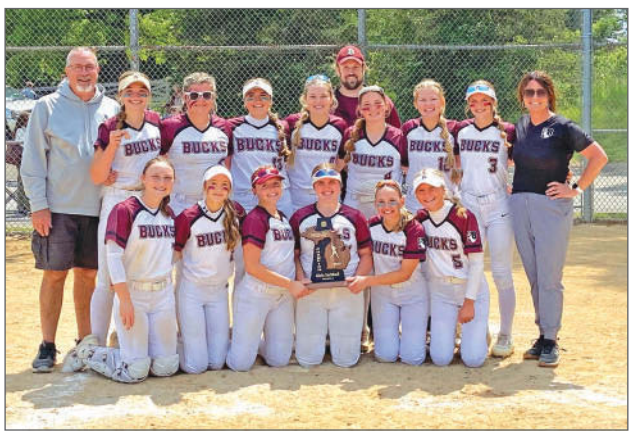
BUCHANAN — The Buchanan softball team has found its groove on the diamond.

The Bucks overcame a 1-5 start to the season to hoist a Division 3 district championship trophy after defeating Brandywine 7-2 in the semifinals and routing River Valley 16-0 May 31 in the championship game. Buchanan is 24-7 since the slow start and head coach Rachel Carlson said the team's rigorous schedule leading up to the tournament has paid off in a big way.

"We faced tough competition throughout our entire regular season, which prepared us well for these matchups," she said. "Additionally, we have been very focused on our improvements, dedicating time each day to enhance our team defense and strengthen our at-bats. Our emphasis on a strong two-strike approach has also made a significant difference in our performance at the plate. Lastly, the energy and enthusiasm from our players contributed immensely to our success on the diamond."

Carlson said the entire team

See TITLE, Page B2



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The Bucks defeated River Valley 16-0 May 31 in the Division 3 district championship game.

TRACK & FIELD

Edwardsburg's Overmyer wins state high jump title

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

It was a big weekend for area track athletes as the Michigan High School Athletic Association hosted its Division 2 and Division 3 State Meets at Hamilton and Kent City High Schools, respectively.

Division 2

For the third time in five years, the Division 2 state champion in high jump hails from Edwardsburg.

Senior Zachary Overmyer leaped a personal-best 6-8 to edge Lakeshore's Declin Doroh in the Division 2 state track and field meet Saturday at Hamilton High School. Overmyer brings a high jump title back to Edwardsburg after former Eddies standout Luke Stowasser won back-to-back championships in 2021 and 2022.

Teammate Mobius Stubblefield earned all-state honors with a seventh-place finish in the 400-meter dash with a time of 50.25.

Niles' Aydan McCarey wrapped up his illustrious Vikings tenure with a runner-up finish in the 110-meter hurdles with a personal-best time of 14.43 and was third in the 400-meter dash with a time of 49.27. McCarey was a state runner-up in both events last year.

Niles' 400-meter relay team of Sam Rucker, Ben Bruckner, Andre Wells and Peyton Gordon qualified for the state meet but was disqualified from its heat. Edwardsburg's 3,200-meter relay team of George Scupham, Maguire Johnson, Jon Leith and Jaden Gregory was also disqualified.

On the girls' side, Edwardsburg's Sarah Pippin capped her historic season with a third-place finish in high jump with a leap of 5-3. Holland's Alba Rodriguez-Lima won the event with a jump of 5-7. Teammate Georgia Babcock placed 16th in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:24.16.

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Niles' Aydan McCarey wrapped up his illustrious Vikings tenure with a runner-up finish in the 110-meter hurdles with a personal-best time of 14.43 and was third in the 400-meter dash with a time of 49.27. McCarey was a state runner-up in both events last year. Sophomore Andre Wells also earned all-state honors by finishing seventh in long jump with a personal-best leap of 21-2.

Dowagiac's Ethan Nearpass also made all-state by earning runner-up finishes in both the adaptive 100-meter (24.84) and 200-meter dash (51.72).

The Vikings' 1,600-meter relay team of Andre Wells, Lucas Debortoli, Ben Bruckner and McCarey placed 18th in 3:30.33

Niles' 400-meter relay team of Sam Rucker, Ben

See STATE, Page B2

PHOTO COURTESY OF TONY OVERMYER | LEADER PUBLICATIONS
Zach Overmyer earned a personal-best jump of 6-8 to win the D2 title.

BASEBALL

WILDCATS EDGE VIKINGS

Niles falls to Three Rivers 2-1 in regional semifinal

By Scott Hassinger
Leader Publications Contributor

VICKSBURG — Timely hits played a big role in the Niles baseball team's run to a second straight Wolverine Conference championship this spring.

But the Vikings' inability to come up with that crucial hit at clutch times on Tuesday played a critical factor in a 2-1 Division 2 regional semifinal loss to fellow league foe Three Rivers on Vicksburg's diamond.

The game was originally set to start at 4 p.m. but was moved up to 10 a.m. due to a threat of rain and thunderstorms.

Thanks to a stellar defensive performance and brilliant showing on the pitcher's mound by sophomore ace Aidan Williams, Three Rivers won the school's first-ever regional game.

Three Rivers (25-14) advances to Saturday's 12:30 p.m. regional championship game against the winner of Thursday's contest between Hopkins and Richland-Gull Lake. The winner will earn a berth in and sticks around afterwards for a state quarterfinals battle at 3 p.m. against the champs from Region 11.

Niles (26-7) appeared to be favored over Three Rivers after sweeping a league doubleheader on the road 8-1 and 6-1 near the end of the regular season.

The loss was a disappointing one for a strong Niles senior class that collected two consecutive league and district championships under Vikings' head coach Jim Brawley.

"The bottom line today was that we just couldn't come up with that key hit when we needed it. I tip my hat to Three Rivers because they played a very good

See EDGE, Page B2

SCOTT HASSINGER | LEADER PUBLICATIONS
Niles junior catcher Dane Ausmus, left, applies a tag at home plate on Jace Gray (24) from Three Rivers. (

TRACK

McCarey caps Niles career among school's all-time track greats

By SCOTT HASSINGER
Leader Publications Contributor

FILE | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

NILES — For such a decorated athlete, Niles track and field star Ayden McCarey is as humble as they come.

That one trait is what makes him such a joy to coach, says Tony Todd, the Vikings' longtime leader of the boys program.

Todd, a Flint Kearsley graduate and former participant himself in the oval sport, has seen many great performers during his 27 years directing Niles' program. But he contends that McCarey is one of the best he's ever coached.

McCarey, who has signed to run track at the Division II level at Grand Valley State University, capped off a glorious high school career during Saturday's Lower Peninsula Division 2 Finals in Hamilton.

McCarey returned home with all-state honors in two events, finishing second in the 110-meter high hurdles (14.43) and third-place in the 400-meter dash (49.27). His time in the 110s broke the school record. He has the second-fastest time at the school in the 400 dash, less than

See CAREER, Page B2

STATE

Continued from page B1

Bruckner, Andre Wells and Peyton Gordon qualified for the state meet but was disqualified from its heat. Edwardsburg's 3,200-meter relay team of George Scupham, Maguire Johnson, Jon Leith and Jaden Gregory was also disqualified.

On the girls' side, Edwardsburg's Sarah Pippin capped her historic season with a third-place finish in high jump with a leap of 5-3. Holland's Alba Rodriguez-Lima won the event with a jump of 5-7. Teammate Georgia Babcock placed 16th in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:24.16.

Niles' senior Izabel Hoskin closed out her time as a Viking in style, setting a school record in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 15.69, good for 11th place. Dowagiac's 400-meter relay team of Shamyra Clark, Tessa Deering, Khamari Mack, Nadia Poorman placed 24th overall with a time of 51.79.

Division 3

Brandywine, Buchanan and Cassopolis all had competitors on Saturday.

On the boys' side, 100-meter dash regional champion Aarenn Buck-Hooper of Cassopolis placed 14th in the preliminary heats with a time of 11.35. Cassopolis' 400-meter relay team of Nikolas Craig, Jaylen Pratt, Cameron Steward and Buck-Hooper placed 20th overall with a time of 44.99. In the high jump, Pratt placed 14th with a leap of 6-1 in a competitive field that saw five athletes jump 6-5 or better.

Buchanan's Liam McBeth placed 22nd in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:07.59. The Bucks' 800-meter relay team of Carson Deming, Tate Figy, Tyler Frame and Jack Sherwood ran a 1:34.10 for a 19th place finish. Its 1,600-meter relay team (Sherwood, McBeth, Fleming, Frame) finished 22nd overall in 3:35.95 and the 3,200-meter relay team (Liam McBeth, Jack Sherwood, John Keser, Jacob Kuntz) placed 18th in 8:32.69.

Brandywine's Kaden Santana jumped 18-6.25 in the long jump for a 25th-place finish.

The girls' side saw school records fall as Brandywine's Lily Gill broke school records in both the 100-meter hurdles (15.92) and 300-meter hurdles (47.79), good for 11th place in both events. Mackenna Price placed 10th in long jump with a leap of 16 feet and Miley Young was 26th in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:39.76.

Buchanan's Audrey Lietz placed 30th in the 200-meter dash with a time of 28.36 and Maddie Young placed 16th in the 1,600-meter run (5:37.45) and 15th inn the 3,200-meter run (12:33.37).

The Bobcats' 800-meter relay team of Byrd, Young, Price, Gill placed 22nd (1:51.04). Brandywine's 1,600-meter relay team of Young, Karleigh Byrd, Gill and Price placed 23rd (4:21.58) and Buchanan's team of Young, Lietz, Justyce Cashier and Ava Graham placed 28th (4:28.62). In the 3,200-meter relay, Buchanan (Adyson Baker, Young, Makynna Williams, Alaina Nagel) placed 28th with a time of 11:11.05 and Brandywine (Alison Murray, Young, Allison Kline, Emily Kline) placed 29th with 11:23.71.

Niles teen turns in strong performance at national bowling tournament

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

ALLEN PARK — A Niles teen recently had the opportunity to compete against some of the nation's best young bowlers.

Conner Weston, 19, competed in the U22 Masters Bowling Tournament May 23-26 in Allen Park. The U22 Masters is a national four-day bowling tournament where 160 athletes –ages 18-22 – from all over the country bowl on the official PBA Masters oil pattern. The tournament is held in exactly the same format as the PBA pros bowl. The first two days were the qualifying days where Weston took the final qualifying spot in the top 32. The MBT uses a step ladder format where Weston, seeded at 32, had to take on the Hawaii's Nate Trentler, the no. 1 seed. While Weston battled, he was eventually defeated by Trentler. The winner of the tournament was defending champion Brandon Bohn, son of famous PBA pro Parker Bohn. This was the second year the U22 Masters has been held it's the replacement tournament for the Junior Gold U20 Division.

Weston is in his fifth year of bowling and is a right-handed, two-handed bowler. Weston bowled for the Niles Vikings in high school and currently is a collegiate bowler for Davenport University where he just finished his first year with a 4.0 GPA. He enjoys college bowling and how it takes him all over the US even to Las Vegas where his team dominated this year.

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Conner Weston.

EDGE

Continued from page B1

baseball game. I thought we pitched and played very well defensively," Brawley said.

"I'm just so proud of all of these kids, especially with our seniors. When they were freshmen we might've been 16-15 at best. Now they walk out of here with two league and two district titles, along with a pair of 20-plus win seasons. I love this group because they are the ones who wanted to turn the program around with their work ethic. They took their lumps as sophomores, but they did exactly what we asked of them and responded well to become better baseball players and individuals. All of them are going to go on and be very successful people in life."

Three Rivers came in poised and determined to extend its season.

Jace Gray walked, stole second and went to third on a wild pitch. Gray eventually scored with one out on a throwing error at first base by the Vikings to put Three Rivers up 1-0 after the first inning. Gabe Young was credited with Wildcat RBI.

Niles went scoreless until the top of the sixth.

The Vikings had runners on second and third base with two outs in the fifth but weren't able to squeeze out a run.

Niles stranded a total of seven base runners on the day.

Josh McIntyre, the losing pitcher of record, relieved Vikings' starter Jason Racht to begin the fifth and set the Wildcats' first three hitters down in order.

Niles manufactured its lone run in the top of the sixth to even the game up at 1-1.

Brenden Olsen, the Vikings' towering 6-foot-6 starting junior first baseman and leading hitter, reached first on a throwing error and went on to second base. Olsen stole third and scored on Dane Ausmus' RBI double to deep center field. Ausmus tried to score the go-ahead run with two outs, but was tagged out at home plate following a great throw from left-fielder Peyton Hradsky into Wildcats' sophomore catcher Tate Rohrer.

SCOTT HASSINGER | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

Niles catcher Dane Ausmus is consoled by Vikings' head coach Jim Brawley Tuesday following the Vikings 2-1 regional semifinal loss at Vicksburg.

"We didn't get a great jump with our runner on that play, but credit their leftfielder with the great throw he made to their catcher and he made a great tag on our runner. That's just the way baseball goes sometimes," Brawley said.

Three Rivers scored the winning run in the bottom of the sixth after turning to a little small-ball to accomplish that task. The Wildcats were successful on back-to-back sacrifice-bunt singles by Brady Penny and Gray. Gray scored the decisive run for the Wildcats on Mason Awe's RBI single up the middle.

"I'm old school and sometimes when you're not hitting a pitcher very well you must do things to get into their head and give yourself some confidence. That's exactly what our kids did in those latter innings," Muffley said.

Brawley expected Three Rivers to resort to small-ball.

"We expected them to bunt and we made a successful pick-off attempt at second base on one sequence to keep us in the game. I thought our kids executed and were prepared, but it just came down to not getting enough hits when we needed them," Brawley said.

Niles managed to put a pair of runners on base in the seventh. Bryce Zache reached base for the Vikings on an error with one out, but was thrown out at second on a fielder's choice. Brody Lace reached safely but the Vikings' next hitter Acie Kirtdoll struck out ending the game.

"Niles is a great baseball team and we knew we'd see him (Jason Racht) on the mound today. We managed to knock him out of the game and our guys made the huge plays on defense. We didn't play a perfect game and made a few mistakes, but we got the tough outs when we needed them most," said Three Rivers head coach Scott Muffley.

Muffley praised the play of Awe, his starting third baseman.

"Mason is a leader on our team as an All-Conference and All-District player. He made some big plays for us over there and Aidan was a huge competitor for us on the mound and our catcher had a big day for a sophomore. We had a lot of young guys starting today and everyone stepped up," Muffley said.

Williams tossed a complete game in the win for Three Rivers, giving up six hits, one walk with six strikeouts.

McIntyre took the loss allowing three hits, one walk with three strikeouts. Racht struck out five and allowed three hits and one walk in four innings of work.

"Both Josh and Jason were very effective for us. We have to score more than two runs to win a game like this against a team like Three Rivers," Brawley said.

CAREER

Continued from page B1

a second behind 2018 Niles grad Jordan Brown, currently the Vikings' sprint coach, who owns the record at 48.50.

McCarey also qualified in the 300 intermediate hurdles and ran anchor leg for the Vikings' 1,600 relay on Saturday.

"Ayden relishes the competition. The bigger the meet, the more he seems to rise to the occasion and perform well. When someone has a faster time, he can't wait to race against them. He gets excited over the chance to compete against someone faster," Todd said.

Also a standout defender for the Niles boys soccer team, McCarey finished runners-up in both the 110 highs and 400 his junior year. As a sophomore he placed sixth in the 110 and 10th in the 300. He began competing in the 400 midway through his sophomore season.

"It's just nice to know that all your hard work you put in got you to state. There's a lot of competition there. I am just happy to represent my school for a third time," McCarey said.

He credits an increase in distance workouts and his increased focus on the 400 as big reasons for his improvement in that event this season.

"I try and focus on all my events, but it just so happened I spent the most time focusing on the 400 this season," McCarey said. "You need a lot of stamina to run that event, and it also helps me in the longer hurdle race as well. I've been successful in the 110 highs because I concentrate on attacking it whereas most people sometimes hop over them and that slows them down and hurts their time. I get a good start, and I'm able to maintain my speed throughout the race."

McCarey owned the fastest time in the 400 among Lower Peninsula Division 2 competitors after the Regional meet. He was ranked second in the 110 highs and fourth in the 300 entering the Finals.

"Ayden goes non-stop and never complains. He's one of those kids that will run through a wall for you," Todd said. "Sometimes I take advantage of that to get that extra effort out of him. He is very humble, and if you try and compliment him he just smiles and puts his head down and keeps going. I worry more than he does if he doesn't get the accolades that he should. He is a quiet kid who leads by example. His form in the hurdles has improved all four years."

McCarey went through his entire high school track career without an injury.

"That's a big thing. Coaches have to learn when to pull back. He's never had a serious injury that left him having to sit out a practice. You can attribute that to his extraordinary work ethic because if you slack off, that's one of the easiest ways to get hurt," Todd said. "He stays in shape year round with his participation in soccer and track. He is very versatile and can compete at the state level in any event from the 100 up to the 400, along with the hurdles and relays.

"His conditioning and running that he does during his soccer practice builds his endurance for track. In turn, the speed he's developed in track helps him out on the soccer field."

McCarey is looking forward to competing in college.

"I decided to go to Grand Valley because they have a solid track program, and it's not that far from home. I liked their business program there too," McCarey said.

Todd is looking forward to seeing what McCarey can do at the next level.

"The biggest thing that will make Ayden a valuable competitor in college is that he is a natural athlete. There is only so much you can coach," Todd said. "It takes a good coach and a good athlete to make a champion. But 90 percent of that is the athlete. If they listen and do the workouts, they will succeed.

"I couldn't be more proud of his four-year high school career. He had the most outstanding track career ever at Niles High School, and he's a great human being and student. This young man is going to do great things at Grand Valley and in life. I'm proud to have been his coach for his entire high school career."

TITLE

Continued from page B1

has stepped up to fill the void of losing seven seniors from last season's 35-5 state semifinal team, including big years from this year's seniors. Caitlyn Horvath broke the school record for hits in a season and also stepped up to pitch this year. Cam Carlson moved from first base to third base, hitting .450 and leading the team in RBIs. Carlson added that Julia Prenkert has played "tremendous" defense at second base and Teyla Coquillard has come back from an ankle injury to strengthen the team's defense in the outfield.

Catcher Aspen Berry and right fielder Cora Weinberg have anchored the 2-3 spots in the lineup and generated a lot of runs for the Bucks.

"We had a rocky start with the hard schedule, learned where we needed to improve and worked to get better," she said.

The Bucks, who are looking for their fourth consecutive regional championship, will travel to Schoolcraft Saturday to face Bangor in the semifinals.

"We will need to continue to play well defensively and have quality at bats," she said. "Most importantly, we need to keep up our team mindset and team energy."

MSU Taps J Batt As Next Director of Athletics

Courtesy of Michigan State Athletics

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

EAST LANSING — Michigan State University President Kevin M. Guskiewicz, Ph.D., with the support of the Board of Trustees, has selected J Batt as the university's next vice president and director of intercollegiate athletics.

Batt currently serves as the vice president and director of athletics at Georgia Tech, where he has led the department since 2022.

"J has an impressive record at several Power 5 schools and an impeccable reputation as a strong and innovative leader," Guskiewicz said. "He will bring experience, excitement and a commitment to elevating Spartan athletics to the next level. We are thrilled to have J join our leadership team at Michigan State."

Batt's contract and appointment as vice president and director of intercollegiate athletics will be voted on by the Board of Trustees at its June 13 meeting, he will start the week of June 16.

"This is truly an amazing opportunity to lead an outstanding, tradition-rich and passionate program, and I am grateful to President Guskiewicz and the Board of Trustees for the opportunity," Batt said. "Working together, in alignment with university leadership, the full athletics department and an enthusiastic fan base, we can take the positive momentum already happening at MSU and reach new levels of success as we move into the next era of intercollegiate athletics. My family and I look forward to joining the Michigan State and East Lansing communities."

In Batt's first year guiding the department at Georgia Tech, 14 of 17 varsity programs earned a spot in postseason competition, and the football team has earned back-to-back bowl berths for the first time since 2013-14, marking the program's first appearance in the Associated Press Top 25 in nine years. During his tenure, the institution broke records in athletic fundraising, surpassing the previous records by more than 40%; set a new record for academic success with a 94 percent graduation rate; renovated and built facilities (including construction of The Dr. Thomas A. Fanning Student-Athlete Performance Center and planned renovation of Bobby Dodd Stadium at Hyundai Field); enhanced the gameday experiences for Yellow Jacket fans; and spearheaded corporate sponsorships to provide transformative revenue for athletics.

Batt has also provided national leadership in collegiate athletics, serving on the House Settlement Implementation Committee charged with guiding the post-settlement era structures, rules and operating principles. He also currently serves as chair of the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, Georgia.

"This is a key moment in the history of Michigan State Athletics," said men's basketball head coach and current co-interim director of athletics Tom Izzo. "With J Batt's hiring, President Kevin Guskiewicz has found the right person to lead our department as college athletics continues to evolve. J has displayed tremendous innovation as a leader and has a proven track record of revenue generation. We are excited to welcome J and his family to Michigan State."

Prior to taking the helm at Georgia Tech, Batt worked at the University of Alabama from 2017-22, serving as executive deputy director of athletics, chief operating officer and chief revenue officer. He was responsible for guiding revenue generation, including charitable giving, ticket sales and other revenue sources. Batt oversaw the successful development, implementation and launch of the Crimson Standard, Alabama Athletics' 10-year, $600 million capital initiative.

Before his arrival in Tuscaloosa, Batt was senior associate athletic director and executive director of the Pirate Club at East Carolina University from 2013-17 and held positions at the University of Maryland, James Madison University, William & Mary and the University of North Carolina, his alma mater.

A member of the 2001 NCAA championship men's soccer team at North Carolina, Batt earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications and a master's degree in sports administration from UNC.

Batt and his wife, Leah, have two sons.

What People Are Saying

"As J Batt takes the helm of Michigan State Athletics, the Spartans enter a new era—one defined by hard work, dedication and a relentless drive for excellence. In a time of staggering change across college sports, his vision and leadership are exactly what the Spartans need to thrive. J did an outstanding job for us at Alabama before taking over at Georgia Tech, where he brought renewed energy and strategic growth to the Yellow Jackets—laying a strong foundation of competitive success. He is the perfect fit in East Lansing to help build champions on and off the field, and leading MSU with purpose into the future." - Nick Saban, Seven-Time National Champion Head Football Coach

"J is an incredibly accomplished sports executive who will bring a wealth of experience to Michigan State. There is no doubt that he is the right person to lead the Spartans at this pivotal time in collegiate athletics and position them for success well into the future. Michigan State is lucky to have such a dedicated and passionate executive on their team and I wish him nothing but the best." - Derek Schiller, President and CEO of the Atlanta Braves

BASKETBALL

Buchanan's Brown signs with Roadrunners

COMMUNITY REPORT

DOWAGIAC — Karmine Brown of Buchanan High School has signed his NJCAA Letter of Intent to continue his academic and basketball career in 1st Source Bank Fieldhouse with Coach Rodell Davis and the Roadrunners.

"Karmine continued to grow as both a student and a basketball player during his time at Buchanan," said Buchanan coach Reid McBeth. "He had a tremendous senior season earning a place on BCAM's All-State Team. We are excited he can continue his basketball journey playing at the next level."

"I am looking forward to having Karmine wear the green and gold," Davis added. "He is a great person and will bring a winning attitude to the locker room every day. Karmine is a really good shooter and will help fill that void on our roster. He plays with great pace and cannot be sped up by opponents. His growth as a player is well-documented and his best basketball is still ahead of him."

Brown is the fifth member of the 2025 SMC Men's Basketball recruiting class, joining Jovohn Ratliff and Jaylen Ingram from Hillcrest, Josh Dennis of Wayne and Bryce Hayes of Chicago.

The Men's Basketball Roadrunners have had three consecutive winning seasons since reviving the program in 2022 after a 26-year hiatus. In the 2024-25 campaign, SMC knocked off No. 2-ranked South Suburban on the road, breaking the Bulldogs' 65-game home win streak. They finished with an overall record of 16-13 and set 35 team and individual school records during the year.

WRESTLING

Marcellus' Harrison signs with SMC

COMMUNITY REPORT

DOWAGIAC — Madisyn Harrison of Marcellus High School has signed her NJCAA Letter of Intent to wrestle for Coach Todd Hesson and the Roadrunners during the 2025-2026 season, making her just the third official NJCAA women's wrestler in the entire state of Michigan.

Harrison was a very strong wrestler for the Wildcats, winning the conference in her weight class and qualifying twice for the state meet, where she earned All-State and Academic All-State honors. She joins Grayce Swanson of Plainwell and current SMC student Alyse Koss.

In April 2024, SMC's Board of Trustees unanimously approved the addition of Women's Wrestling, Men's Track & Field and Women's Track & Field as official NJCAA sports, to start competition in Fall 2025. Only 29 other NJCAA schools nationally currently offer women's wrestling. SMC will be the first two-year college in Michigan to offer the sport.

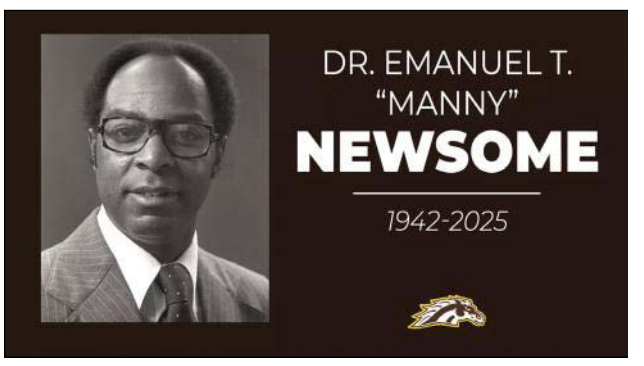
On April 9, the college announced the construction of a new 11,195 square-foot wing of the Zollar Building that will quadruple the space available to the men's and women's wrestling teams. It will double the mat capacity for practice sessions and provide additional competition space for hosting conference and regional meets. The new facility will also include a dedicated fitness and warm-up area, coaches' offices, locker rooms and additional restrooms. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in May, on-site work is well underway with occupancy targeted for February 2026.

"Madisyn is a fantastic pickup for the Roadrunners," said Marcellus coach Samuel Adams. "She's a competitor, there is no doubt in my mind she'll do great things at the next level. The sky is the limit for Madisyn."

"Madisyn has state-level experience and is a great athlete," Hesson added. "She is enthusiastic and ready to help start our women's program."

WMU Athletics mourns passing of Hall of Famer Manny Newsome

Courtesy of Western Michigan Athletics



KALAMAZOO — The Western Michigan Division of Intercollegiate Athletics mourns the passing of WMU Athletics Hall of Famer Dr. Emanuel T. "Manny" Newsome, who recently passed away at the age of 83.

A native of Gary, Ind., Newsome came to Western Michigan in 1960 after graduating from Theodore Roosevelt High School, where he starred in both basketball and track, helping the track and field program to a state championship.

During his time in Kalamazoo, Newsome became one of the most prolific scorers in collegiate basketball history, leading the nation in scoring for part of his senior year. Among his best career performances were a pair of 45-point efforts against both Michigan State and Toledo during the 1963-64 campaign. At the time, 45 points were the most scored in a single game in school history.

Over his three-year varsity career, he poured in a school-record 1,787 points, a record which stood for 45 years. As a senior, he netted 654 points, another record which he held for more than four decades. His 32.7 points per game scoring average during the 1963-64 season, career scoring average of 26.3 points per contest and 729 career field goals all still stand as program records.

Throughout his career as a Bronco, Newsome received numerous accolades, including earning three straight All-MAC First Team selections. Following the 1963-64 season, he was named an All-American by the National Association of Basketball Coaches. He also went on to participate in the U.S. Olympic Trials.

In recognition of his achievements, Dr. Newsome was selected to the WMU Athletics Hall of Fame in 1974, the Mid-American Conference Hall of Fame in 1988, the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 1994 and the Gary Indiana Sports Hall of Fame in 2024. In 2018, Western Michigan University officially retired his #5 jersey, making him the only player in program history to receive that honor.

Newsome received a B.S. in Physical Education & Speech from WMU in 1964 and an M.S. in Physical Education from WMU the following year. He began his professional career at Western Michigan in the Office of Financial Aid as a counselor and field representative. He broke barriers in academia, becoming the first African American administrator in the university's history.

Following his time at Western Michigan, he went on to earn his Ph.D. in Counseling & Psychological Services in Higher Education from Indiana State. Dr. Newsome completed his post-doctoral studies at Harvard University, where he received a certificate in Management and Development in Higher Education.

Dr. Newsome continued his work in higher education at the University of Toledo, where he served as Dean of Students. He then went on become the Senior Vice President of Student Affairs at Florida Atlantic University from 1988 until he retired in 2006. After retirement, he served as Adjunct Professor of Educational Leadership at FAU until 2016.

"As the only Bronco men's basketball student-athlete with a retired number, Dr. Manny Newsome has left a legacy of excellence with our basketball program and university," Western Michigan Vice President / Director of Athletics Dan Bartholomae said. "That excellence includes recognition as an All-American and WMU Athletics Hall of Fame member, but also as an accomplished student affairs professional at WMU and several other distinguished institutions. We all mourn this loss and hold his family in our hearts."

Dr. Newsome leaves behind his wife, Nellie, children Eric, Ericka and Dr. Kimberly Newsome, and grandchildren Brandon, Jalen, Diamond, Sapphire and Emmanuel Newsome.

GOLF

Cassopolis boys golf punches ticket to D4 state finals

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — For the first time in 31 years, the Cassopolis boys golf team is headed to the MHSAA Division 4 State Tournament.

The Ranger golfers finished third at the regional tournament May 28 at Hampshire Country Club in Dowagiac, shooting 332. Kalamazoo Hackett Catholic took first place with a score of 313. Hackett's Chris Ogrin earned medalist honors with a score of 76.

The Rangers were led by Dickson Samadder who placed fifth shooting an 80. The Division 4 State Final began yesterday and continues today at Katke Golf Course in Big Rapids.

The Rangers also won their fifth consecutive Southwest 10 Conference title, equaling the longest streak in school history.

Rangers scores

Alan Wegner 84, William Westrate 85, Turner Westrate 83, Dickson Samadder 80, Trystan Grant 94

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

GOLF

Edwardsburg ninth, Niles 12th at D2 golf regionals

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

CENTREVILLE — The Edwardsburg golf team finished ninth and Niles 12th at the Division 2 regional held in Centreville May 29.

Vicksburg captured the regional championship with a score of 304, a one-stroke win over runner-up Gull Lake. Rilley Briggs and Judah McClelland of Vicksburg tied for medalist honors each with an 18-hole score of 72.

Edwardsburg finished with 331 points and Niles 351. Edwardsburg's Ben Fish placed 21st with a score of 81 and Maverick Gates fired a score of 83. Niles' Landon Martin and Owen Podlin each placed 34th with scores of 84.

The Bulldogs advance to the MHSAA State Finals held June 6-7 at Bedford Valley Country Club in Battle Creek.

Division 2 golf regional

At Island Hills Golf Course

Medalist

Rilley Briggs, Vicksburg – 72.

Team scores

Vicksburg 304, Richland Gull Lake 305, Parma Western 308, Battle Creek Harper Creek 313, Jackson 323, Jackson Northwest 324, St. Joseph 324, Marshall 326, Edwardsburg 331, Charlotte 339, Coldwater 347, Niles 351, Lakeshore 357, Paw Paw 360, Three Rivers 361, Eaton Rapids 366, Sturgis 373, Battle Creek Pennfield 382, Berrien Springs 383

Individual qualifiers

Joey Mario, (HC) 72, Brayden Norton (J) 73, Leo Nguyen (J) 74

Edwardsburg results

Ben Fish 81, Maverick Gates 82, Cody Schaap 83, Joseph Shively 85, Michael Wright 89

Niles results

Landon Martin, 84 Owen Podlin 84, Gavyn Luke 87, Carson Wright 96, Blake Hopper 99

GOLF

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

Notre Dame receives home/away ACC opponents

Courtesy of Notre Dame Athletics

CHARLOTTE — The Atlantic Coast Conference announced the matchups of the league's 18-game men's basketball schedule for the 2025-26 season. The ACC has had 20-game conference schedules since the 2019-20 season and last played 18-game league schedules from the 2012-13 through 2018-19 seasons. The league announced the 18-game conference schedules for 2025-26 on May 7.

The 18-game schedule features teams starting league play in late December and ending on the first Saturday of March. Each team will play one primary partner both home and away as well as one variable partner home and away. The variable partner will be determined each season. Teams will play one game, home or away, against 14 of the remaining 15 teams annually.

Primary Partners:

- Boston College-Notre Dame
- Clemson-Georgia Tech
- California-Stanford
- Duke-North Carolina
- Florida State-Miami
- Louisville-SMU
- NC State-Wake Forest
- Pitt-Syracuse
- Virginia Tech-Virginia

Variable Partners for 2025-26 Season:

- Boston College-Miami
- California-Georgia Tech
- Clemson-Pitt
- Duke-Louisville
- Florida State-SMU
- North Carolina-Syracuse
- NC State-Virginia
- Notre Dame-Stanford
- Virginia Tech-Wake Forest

The full conference schedule, including dates, times and television designations, will be announced in September.

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•TOTAL REMOVAL, TRIMMING & LOT CLEARING.
•STUMP GRINDING
• STORM DAMAGE
•SEASONED FIREWOOD
SAME DAY SERVICE, EXCELLENT CLEAN-UP
*60 & 80 FT. BUCKET TRUCK
FULLY INSURED.
PLEASE CALL 574-848-5845.

Public Notices

Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

Abandoned vehicle auction Thursday June 12, 2025 at 8:30 AM.

2011 Chrysler
Vin 2C3CK6CT9BH530597
2005 Chevrolet
Vin 1GNEK13TX5R248732
2005 Toyota
Vin 4T1BE32K55U514285

Public Notices

Contact Road Runner, Towing and recovery at 269-429-5080 for viewing locations and times. Social distancing rules still apply and bidding starts at acquired fees

Niles Daily Star:
June 7, 2025
AV/11 CHRYSLER

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF SELF STORAGE SALE

Please take notice Just Simple Storage - Menominee located at N710 County Rd 577, Menominee, MI, 49858 intends to hold an Auction of storage units in default of payment. The sale will occur as an Online auction via www.storagetreasures.com on 6/19/2025 at 12:00 PM. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Unit #32. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice.

Niles Daily Star:
May 31 and June 7, 2025
SALE 6.19.25

PUBLIC NOTICE

Apex Storage Auction @ 2601 N. 5th St. Niles MI 49120 on June 21, 2025 starting at 10:00 AM.

Rodney Glenn- Punching bag, children's toys, bed frame, pool table, mattress, TV stand

Andrew Wheeler- 3 adult bikes,desk,hedge trimmer, cooler,extension cords, ironing board, suitcase, shoe rack

David Laskowski- 10 boxes of plastic toys, car jack,small table

Niles Daily Star:
June 7 and 14, 2025
STORAGE AUCTION

Legal Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

RE: THE NORMAN G. AND MARY K. ARNOLD (NOW IRREVOCABLE) TRUST DATED JANUARY 12, 2000
SURVIVING SETTLOR: NORMAN G. ARNOLD
DATE OF DEATH: MAY 18, 2025
...DATE OF BIRTH: MAY 29, 1928
EIN# 39-6854511
SUCCESSOR TRUSTEE: KREG J. ARNOLD

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The Settlor of the above trust, NORMAN G. ARNOLD, died May 18, 2025; he resided at 420 North 14th Street, Niles MI 49120, in the City of Niles, Berrien County, Michigan. Creditors of NORMAN G. ARNOLD, Deceased and the above trust are notified that all claims against NORMAN G. ARNOLD, individually and the above trust will be forever barred unless presented to Kreg J. Arnold, Successor Trustee of the Trust, or to Attorney James J. Mollison, whose respective addresses are listed below, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice. No probate estate is necessary nor anticipated.

Date: June 7 , 2025

Kreg J. Arnold, Successor Trustee
424 Autumn Trail
Michigan City, IN 46360
219-873-4951

James J. Mollison [P17884]
Attorney for Amanda M. McKee
4 South Lincoln Avenue
Niles, MI 49120
269-684-7600
C 269-930-4170

Niles Daily Star: June 7, 2025
EST/ARNOLD, N.

Need to find the right employee?
WE CAN HELP.
Reach the county for less using Leader Publications classifieds. Need a quick quote? Submit your ad online at LeaderPub.com.
Call 269-591-6105.

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BERRIEN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
CASE NO and JUDGE
2024-0334- DE-R
HON BRIAN S. BERGER

Court address 811 Port Street FLOOR 4 St. Joseph, MI 49085
Court telephone no. 269-983-7111

Estate of Vicki Jo Shields, Deceased
Date of birth: October 16, 1955

TO ALL CREDITORS:**
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Vicki Jo Shields, died March 16, 2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Brooke Garcia, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street Floor 4 St. Joseph, MI 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
June 7, 2025

Brooke Garcia 2428 Elizabeth Street Niles, MI 49120 269-470-4882

James J. Mollison, P17884, 4 South Lincoln Avenue, Niles, MI 49120, 269-684-7600

Niles Daily Star: June 7, 2025
EST/SHIELDS, V.

JOB OPENING-DPS Part-time Seasonal Maintenance Wrler

The City of Dowagiac is accepting applications for a part-time position as a Seasonal Maintenance Worker with the Department of Public Services. Applicants must be able to safely and efficiently perform routine, moderately difficult, and emergency tasks involving manual labor and machinery/equipment operation in conjunction with activities surrounding the construction, maintenance, and repair of the water, sewer, and storm systems, streets, bridges, sidewalks, alleys, right-of-way systems, and municipal buildings, facilities and grounds. Must possess a high school diploma (or equivalent) and a valid Driver's License. $17.00 per hour starting wage. Seasonal position from May through October.

Applications will be accepted until June 6, 2025. Interested applicants should fill out an application online at www.cityofdowagiac.com or send a cover letter and resume to Amanda Sleigh, Assistant City Manager/HR Director by email to acm@dowagiac.org.

The City of Dowagiac is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin or disability in employment or the provision of services.

DEALS ON WHEELS

0 DOWN DELIVERS!

ON THE SPOT FINANCING

Selling Fast!
Buy Now
Before Prices go Higher

2014 CHEVY SONIC LT
Fully service and ready to go

Only $5,900

2010 NISSAN ROGUE AWD
Just in!! Fully serviced and ready to go with leather and a sunroof

Only $5,900

2019 NISSAN VERSA
Just in!!
35mpg, fully serviced and ready to go

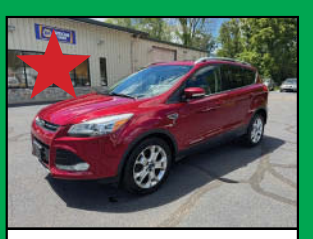
Only $9,900

2013 FORD FIESTA TITANIUM
Power moonroof, leather in mint condition

Only $9,900

2012 TOYOTA PRIUS
Just in!! Gets over 50 miles per gallon!!

Only $10,900



2016 FORD ESCAPE TITANIUM AWD
All the toys!!

Only $12,900

2018 KIA RIO HATCHBACK
Just in!!
Only 53,000 miles

Only $12,900

PONTIAC SOLSTICE
Low miles, great shape…Nice car to drive to car shows

Only $13,900

2019 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN
Get you mini-van for the mini-mum

Only $13,900

1999 FORD F-250 CLUB CAB XLT
This is a one owner in mint condition with low miles and very sought after 7.3 diesel

Only $19,900

2023 KEYSTONE HIDEOUT 26BH
Like New, solar panels… over $48,000 new

Only $19,900

2014 CHEVY SILVERADO HIGH COUNTRY 4 X 4
Just in!! It's in the air so folks will stare!!

Only $19,900

2018 CHEVY EQUINOX PREMIER AWD
Diesel. 45 miles per gallon

Only $21,900

2019 KIA STINGER
OH BABY!!

Only $23,900

2022 CHEVY COLORADO EX CAB LT
Just in!! Off lease with full power option and 45,000 miles

Only $23,900

2018 FORD TRANSIT HIGHROOF
Like new with low miles

Only $24,900

2023 HYUNDAI SONATA SEL
Like new with only 4,000 miles!

Only $24,900

2019 HYUNDAI KONA IRONMAN
Extremely rare. Only 1 of 500. Will be a collector's item

Only $24,900

2019 DODGE DURANGO SXT 4 X 4
Only 31,000 miles and like new

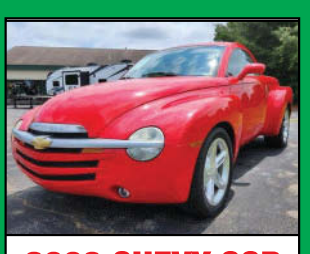
Only $24,900

2020 CHEVY COLORADO EX CAB 4 X 4
Showroom new, low miles

Only $26,900

2022 CHEVY COLORADO EX CAB 4 X 4
Just in!! Off lease, one owner with super low miles

Only $26,900



2003 CHEVY SSR
BIG BLOCK, SUPER RARE
Only 43,000 miles

Only $29,900

2020 NISSAN ARMADA 4 X 4
Big ol rig!!

Only $29,900

2020 BUICK ENCLAVE AVENIR AWD
Every option, over $60k new. Half price!!

Only $29,900

2024 CHEVY EQUINOX RS AWD
Just in!!
8,000 miles
with every option!!

Only $33,900

2016 FORD F-250 XLT 4 X 4
Crew cab, long box
Diesel, Low miles

Only $34,900

2020 CHEVY SILVERADO CREW Z-71
Oh So Purdy!

Only $39,900

2022 TOYOTA TACOMA BEAST
OFF LEASE,
one owner with EVERY option
Only 13,000 miles

Only $43,900

2020 CHEVY SILVERADO LT CREW 4 X 4
Diesel,
Super low miles
Save thousands!

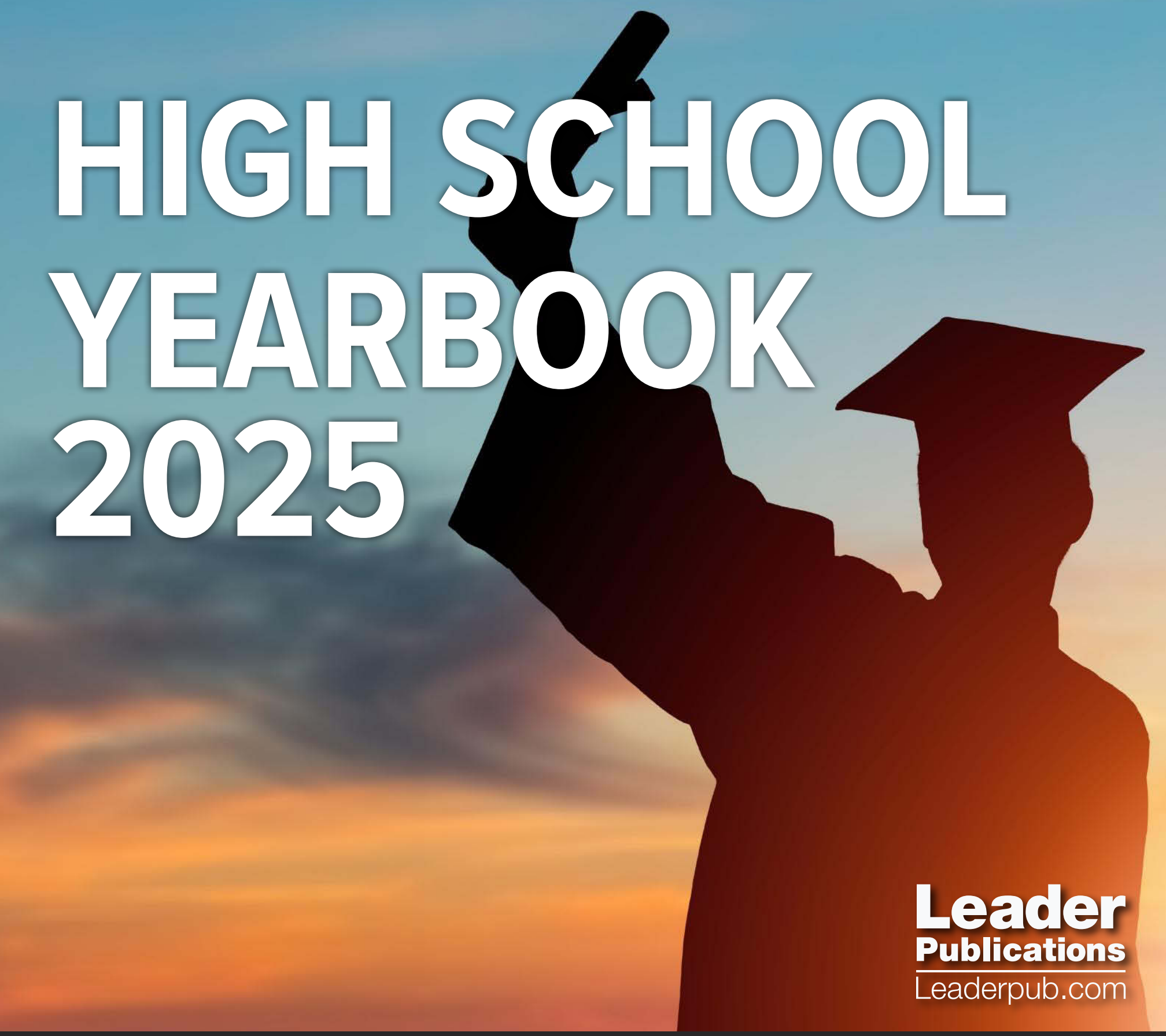
Only $45,900

2023 RAM CREW DUALLY 4 X 4
Big Horn, rollin' coal

Only $57,900

SEE A STAR IT'S A 1 OWNER CAR

269-783-3325 • M-51 DOWAGIAC



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Graduating Spring 2025?

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BERTRAND INNOVATION CENTER
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Niles, MI 49120
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ALLEGAN COUNTY AREA TECHNICAL & EDUCATION CENTER
2891 116th Avenue
Allegan, MI 49010
269-512-7800

Lake Michigan College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

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Congratulations Class of 2025!

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Financial Advisor
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Justin Nurenberg
Financial Advisor
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Suite A • Buchanan, MI
269-695-9747

Kim MacGregor
Financial Advisor
148 S Front Street
Dowagiac, MI
269-782-3012

John S. Seculoff
Financial Advisor
901 Spruce Street
Suite 8 • Dowagiac, MI
269-782-1800

Greg A. Surber
Financial Advisor
2010 S 11th Street
Suite 140 • Niles, MI
269-684-6733

Jennifer Salmon
Financial Advisor
719 E Main Street
Niles, MI
269-684-8282

Shane R. Shidler
Financial Advisor
2726 S 11th Street
Suite 10 • Niles, MI
269-684-7398

Becky Brown
Financial Advisor
213 E Main Street
Niles, MI
269-684-6418

Darin Shrock
Financial Advisor
68925 M-62
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269-663-3130

BRANDYWINE

BOBCATS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!

CLASS OF 2025

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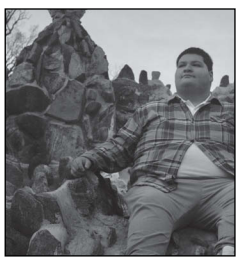
AVA ADAMS

HAILEY ALBERTSON

HAILEE ALLEN

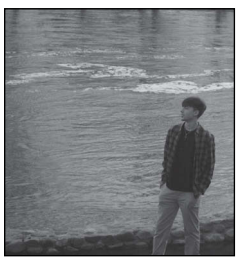

JUAQUIN ALVARADO

MONSERRAT AVINA

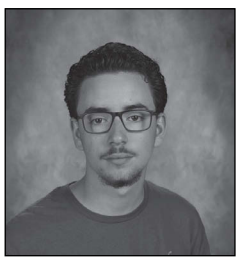
EBONEE BABCOCK

BAILEY BAUER

LIBBY BAUMAN


PAYTON BORTZ

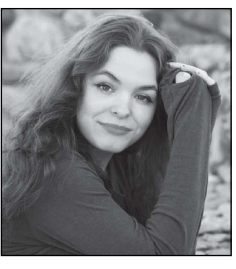
ZAYNE BORTZ


TRISTAN BOWER

KLOWEY BRONSON

BENJIMIN BROWN

DANNIE BUNCH


LAURA CAREW

RYLEIGH CARPENTER

EMMA COMER

TAYLOR CRAIG

STEFFANY CRUZ

ALEXANDRA CURTIS-LEE

SAMANTHA DAUS

SELYNDA DAVIS

ELIZABETH DENO

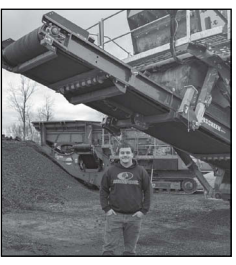
AUTUMN DOPKOWSKI

ADELYN DROTOZ

ALEX ELLIS

STEVEN FERGUSON

MARLEIGH FREYER


BRANDON FRYE

DYLAN GARRIS

ADELINE GILL

KATELYN GODSEY

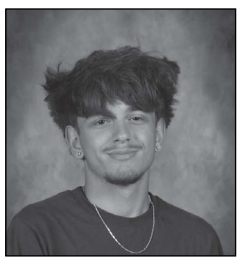
JERAD GOODGER

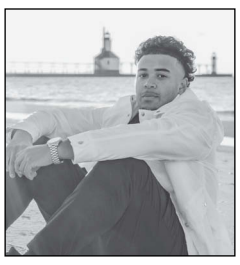
GABRIEL HARALDSON

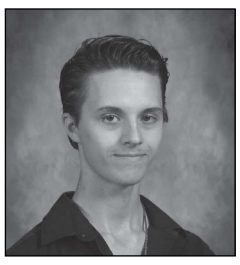
EMMALEIGH HAWLEY

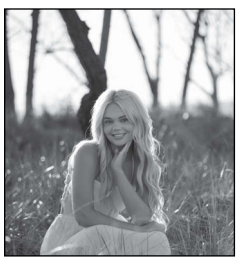
CARTER HAYES

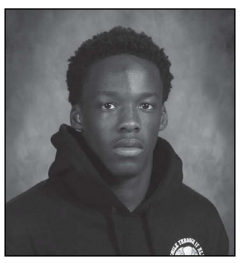
TIFFANY HAYSLIP


PRESTON HEED


JORDAN HESTER


MICHAEL HOFFMAN


LOGAN HOOD


MAURICE HOSKIN

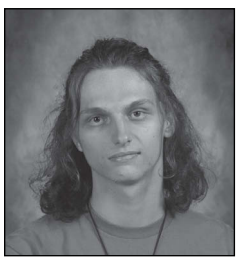
COLTON HUBBARD

MACKENZIE HUFFMAN

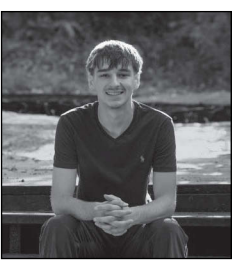
JALYNN HUSTON

ISABEL KELEMS

THOMAS KILLELEA


ZACHARY KING

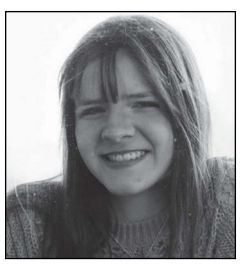
MASON KINZIE


JAYCE KLAPP

ASHLYN KOHLER

PAIGE KRISHER

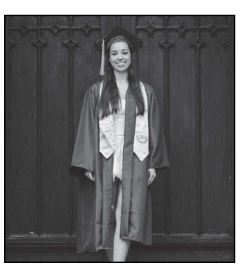
KAMORA LANE


OLIVIA LAURI

KAILEN LINTZ

JAYDEN MANIGOLD

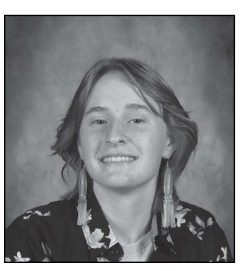
ERIC MARTINEZ

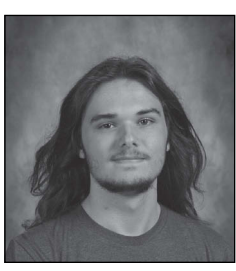

NIYAH MASON

SIMONE MCKAY

DANIEL MORRISON

AUBREE MURRAY


ALAINA NEEDHAM


LOGAN NOACK

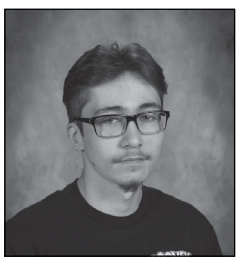
EMMA PAGLIERANI

MIRIAM PETERSON

CHEYENNE PIERCE

DESTINY POSEY

IRELAND PRENKERT


JORDAN REESE

CAITLIN ROBB

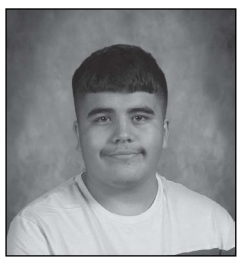
BRANDYWINE BOBCATS

BAILEY ROEDER

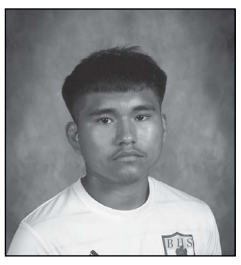
LUKE ROMAN

TRENTON RUNNELS

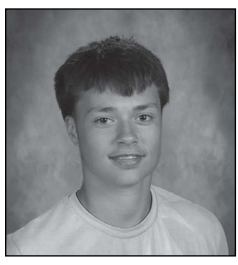
JESUS SALGADO-MARTINEZ



DIEGO SANCHEZ



PEDRO SEGUNDO



MASON SIMMONS

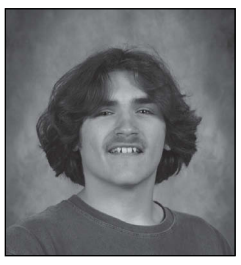
CARTER SOBECKI

ESZTER SPIESSWINKEL

ADAM STARR

MICHELLE STEPHENS

TAYLOR SWANK



AARON GILMOUR

LEXI TROUP

LAILA VANDERBOEGH

DELANDAH VANDYKE

HUNTTER VELLA

COURTNEY WATKINS

MICHAEL WHITE

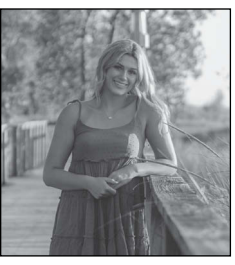
MACKENZIE WITT

SHAYLEE WIXSON

MILEY YOUNG

NOT PICTURED

KENDRICK BRITTIN
HAILEE CULBERSON
ALEXANDER MORRIS



CHLOE ADDISON AALFS

KATELYN ELIZABETH AILES

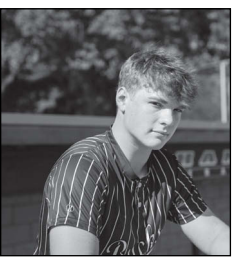
MAXWELL ARBANAS

SOPHIA JOE BACHMAN

TYLER DEAN BAKER

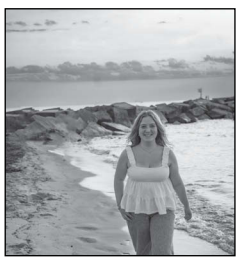
HARRISON GUNNAR
MAYSE BENNETT

EVAN COLE BENNINGTON



CONNOR THOMAS BILLINGTON

LILLIAN HANNAH BRACKETT



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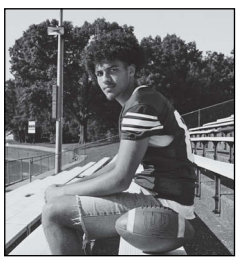
SALEEN NICOLE BRENNAN



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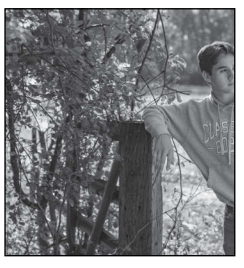


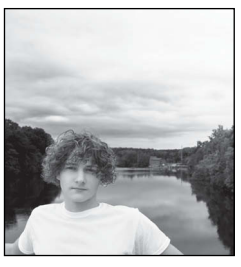
BODIE KING BRYANS

GRACE MADELINE CALKINS

ALLIE MARIE CANFIELD

CAMERON ELIZABETH CARLSON

ALYSSA JEAN CARSON



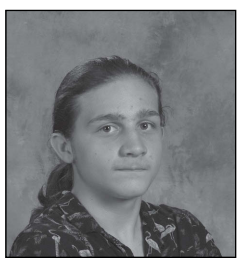
WILL CARSON

RAYMOND GERALD CLEARY

TEYLA MARIE COQUILLARD

MAKAYA RENEE CORNWELL

LOGAN JAMES COUSINEAU

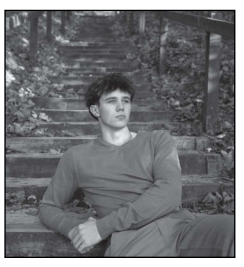


RICHARD DANIEL DESANTIS

LANDON JAY FANKHAUSER

CHRISTIAN JAMES
PATRICK FELLOWS

KAITLIN ANN FERRELL



DANE ROBERT FIGY

JAKE MATTHEW FRANKLIN

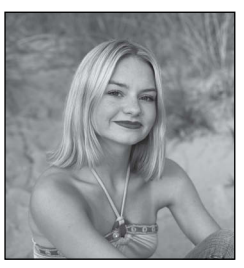
JENNA LEIGH FRANKLIN

MASON ROBERT
PATRICK FRONTCZAK

BRETT ELIZABETH GAIR

ALICE GIULIANINI

AUDREY ELIZABETH
GNODTKE-TUCEK



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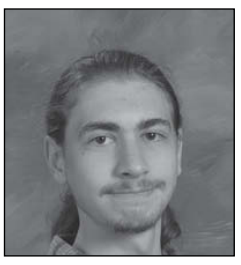
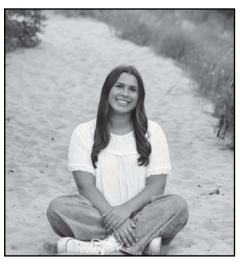

DRAKE NATHANIEL HEIMBUCH-WILLIAMS


ALAINA LEANN HICKOK

CAITLYN ROSE HORVATH

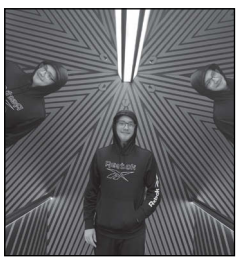
CAMERON IRENE HORVATH

HAYDEN STEVEN HOWARD

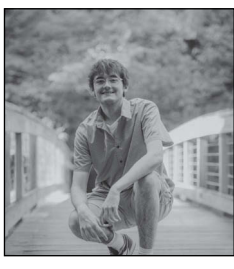
GIBSON MARIE JOHNSON

DAVID BRIAN ILER JR.

CHRISTOPHER LEE LIVESAY JR.


JACKIE ALLEN MORLEY JR.

KAIDEN LEROY KARN


ETHAN ANDREW KUNTZ

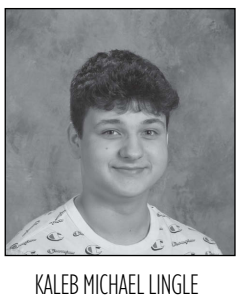
MORGAN CELESTE KUNTZ

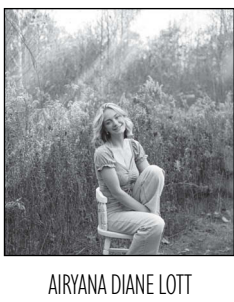
OLIVIA RAE KUTEMEIER

WALTER EVAN LARY

TRINITY MAE LIEBETRAU

AUDREY JEAN LIETZ


KALEB MICHAEL LINGLE


AIRYANA DIANE LOTT

AALIYAH ELAINE MARKS

DAKOTA LYNLEE MARSH

SAUL MARTINEZ-JUAREZ

KYLEE BROOKE MCDONALD

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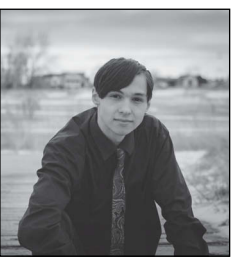
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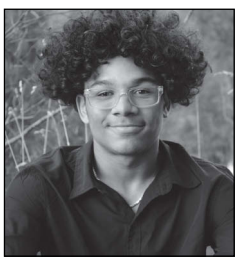
WAYNE MORIN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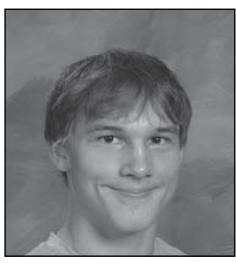
TRISTAN DONALD NESBITT

NINA NOAKOWSKI

ISABELLA OVERMYER

ALEC BRUCE PASTRYK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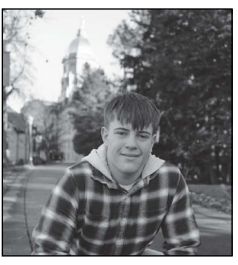
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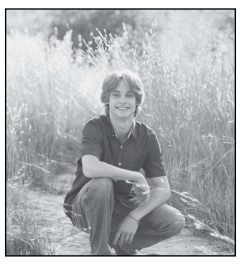
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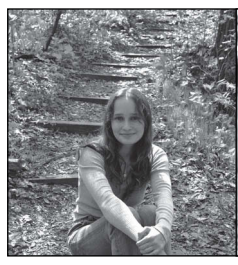
SUTHERLAND MICHELLE PHILIP

THOMAS MATTHEW PLEASANT

JULIA JASMINE PRENKERT

EVYN JANE PRUETT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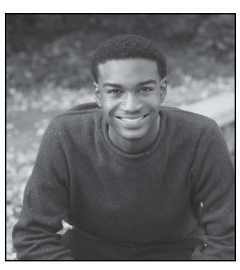
AKIRRAH JALISA ROBINSON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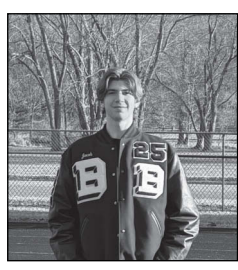
GABRIEL KONDWANI SCHMELING

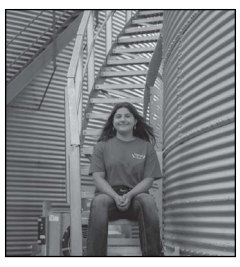
CARSON ALLEN SHELTON

SIDNEY ELLE SMITH

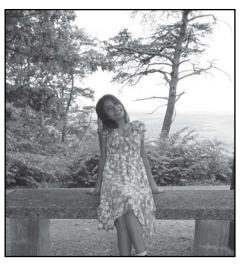
EMMA MARIE SNODGRASS


JACOB ROGER STINES-VANCOURT

JONATHAN STOUGH


BROOKE LOUISE STREFLING

LAURA KATHERINE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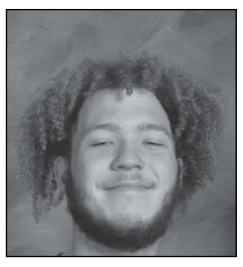
KRISTEN SUE TAVERNIER
ISABELLA ROSE TIBBLES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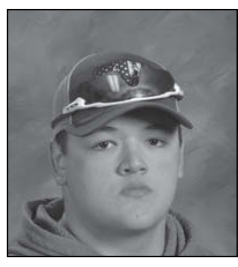
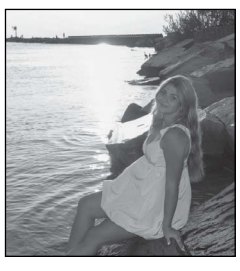

COLIN DAVID TOMPKINS

GABRYAEL WALTER TOMPKINS

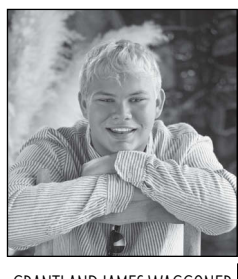
AVERY TRIGG

AURELIA SAGE TROWBRIDGE


AVA JUNE TROWBRIDGE

CHANCE PATRICK TUCKER

PAYTON RILEY TUCKER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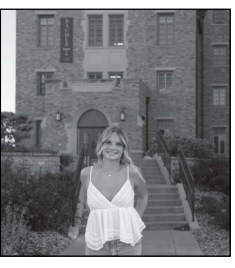
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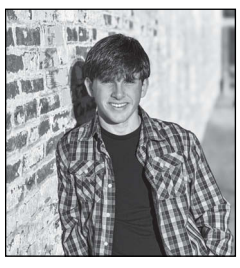
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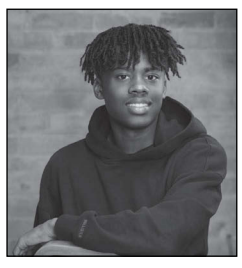
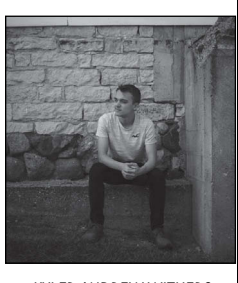
DUSTYN WILLIAM WESOLOWSKI

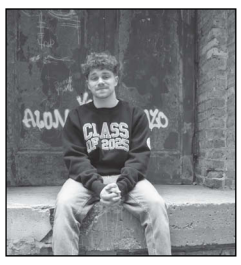
LOGAN TIMOTHY WIGGINS


DARIUS WILLIAMS

KARLEY DREW WILLIAMS


KYLER ANDREW WITHERS

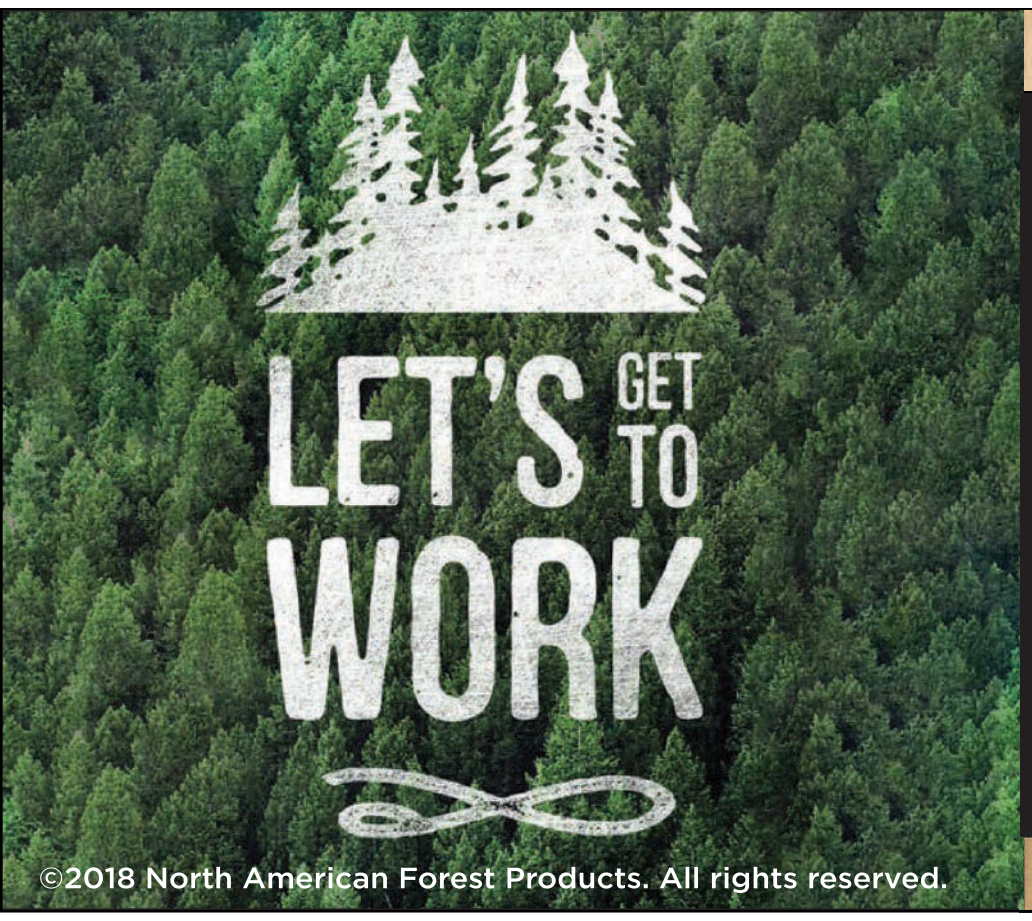
MADELINE ABIGAIL YOUNG



NOAH MATTHEW ZIELKE

GOOMARAL ZORIGTBAYAR

NOT PICTURED:
KADENCE NICOLE DORTON
OLIVIA DOUGHTY
AUNJUNAE JORDAN
HALEY LARSH
KAHYLY MATTIMORE
ALAN REYBUCK
HAILEY ROBBINS
STACEE UNGERECHT
MICHAEL WILLIAMS



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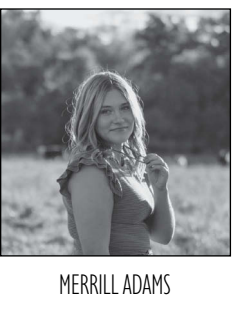
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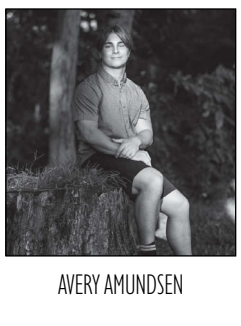
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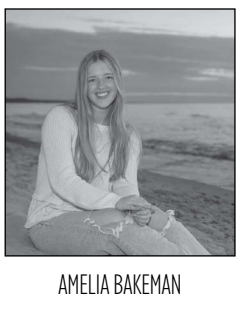
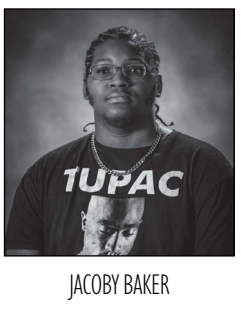
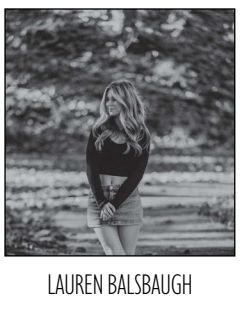

AMELIA BAKEMAN

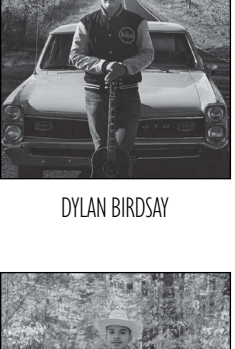


JACOBY BAKER

ELIZABETH BALE

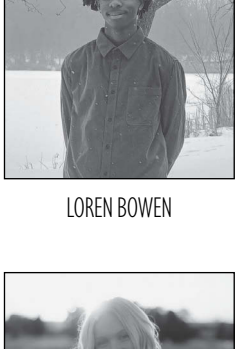

LAUREN BALSBAUGH

MAKAYLA BEST

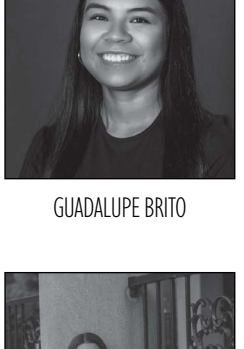

DYLAN BIRDSAY

AARON BONCZYNSKI

EMMA BONTRAGER


LOREN BOWEN

MASON BRESSLER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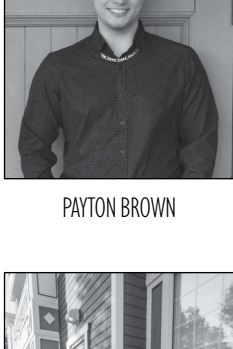
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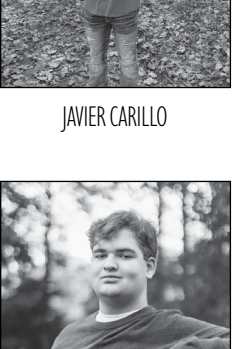
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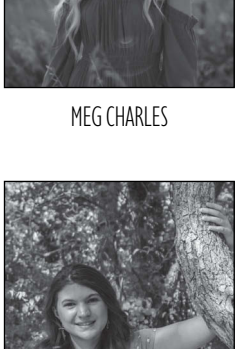
MASAEL CARILLO

CAL CHAPMAN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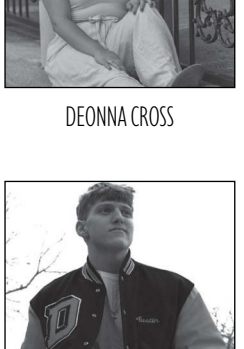
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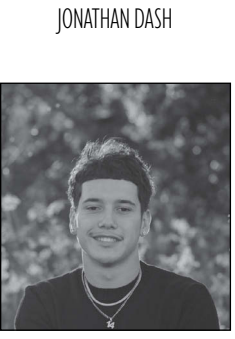
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CALVIN DIAMOND

ARAINA DUDLEY

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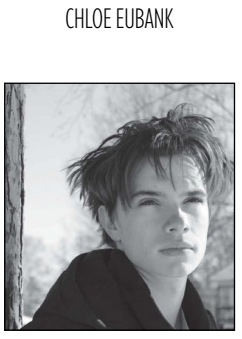
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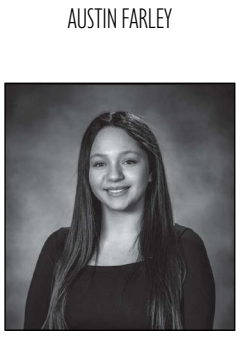
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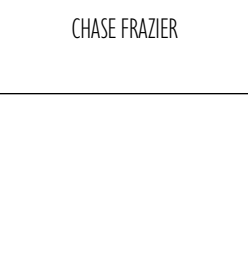
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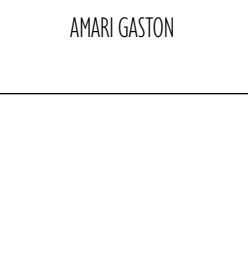
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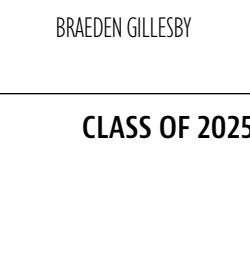
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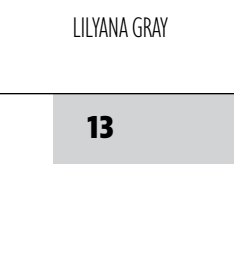
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DOWAGIAC CHIEFTAINS

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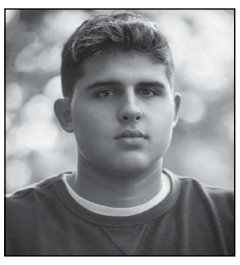
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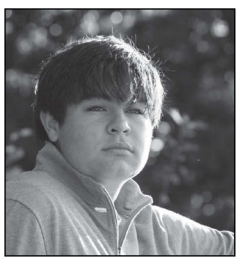
REBECCA GUERNSEY

MARYAM HADDAD

HAYDEN HAGEMANN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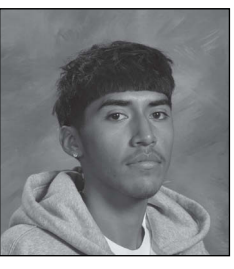
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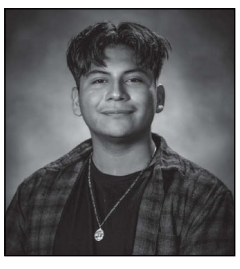
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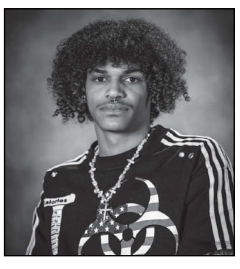
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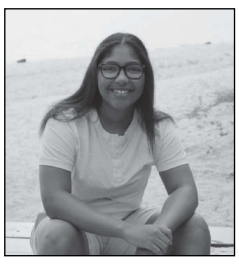
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MALAYNA KLUG

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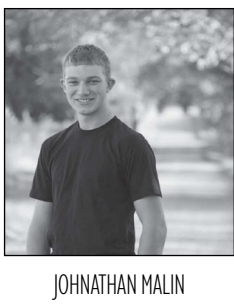
ANNELIESE LEE

ALEXIS LEWIS

DANIKA LOVELL

GREYSEN LOZADAA

SAVANNAH MABUS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KAREN MANDUJANO

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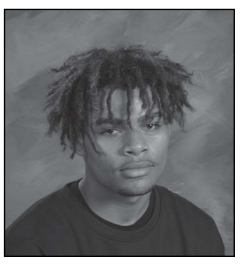
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EFRAIN MORENO

ALDAN MORFORD

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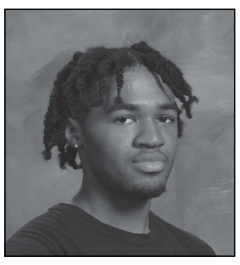
SAMANTHA MOTTWEILER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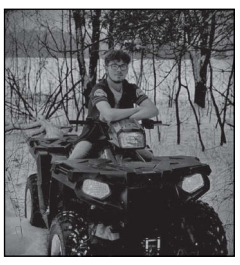
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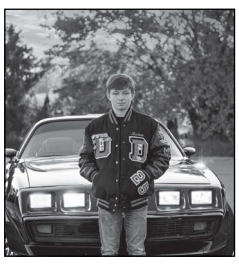
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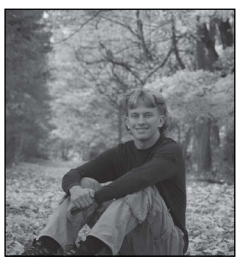
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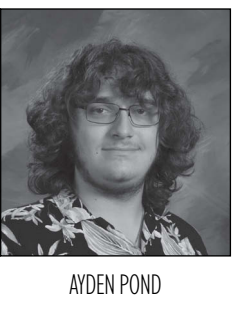
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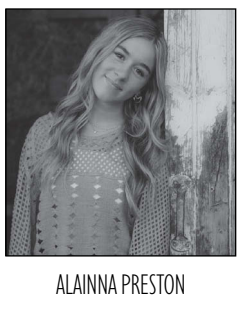
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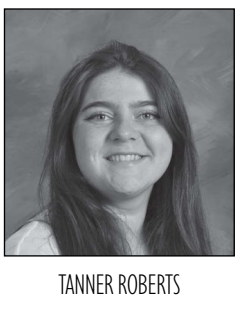
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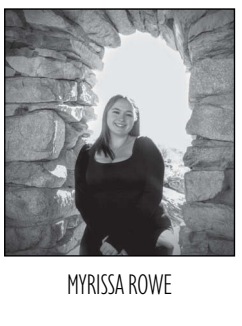
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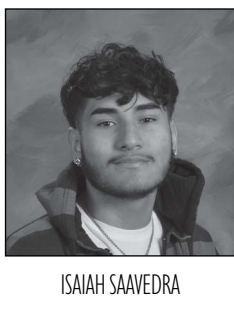
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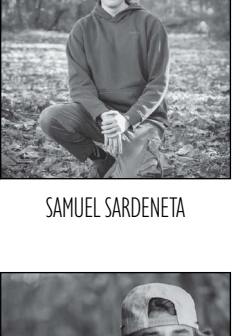
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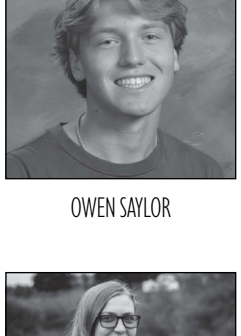
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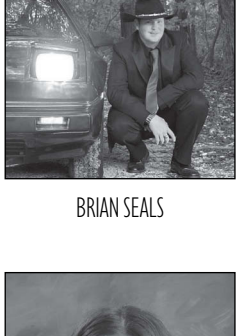
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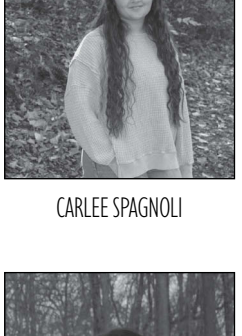
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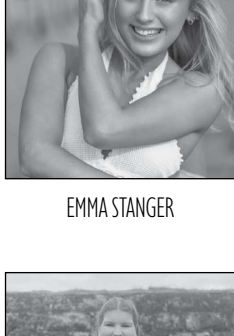
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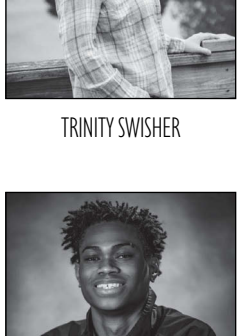
ELIJAH STOUT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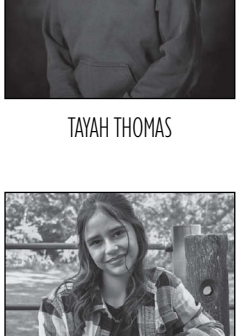
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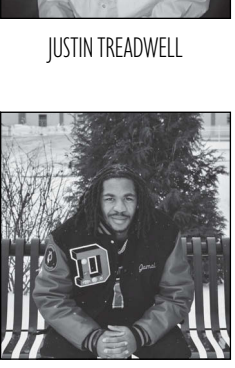
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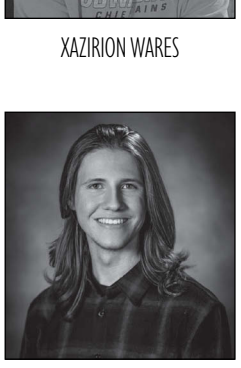
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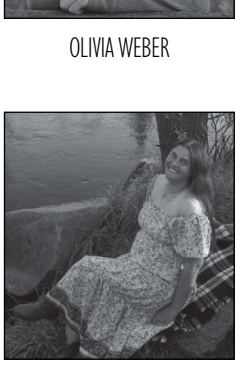
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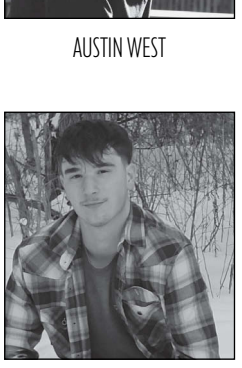
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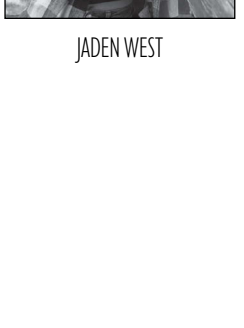
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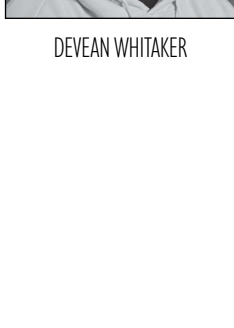
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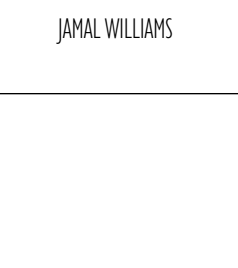
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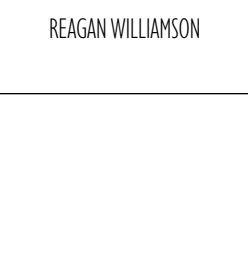
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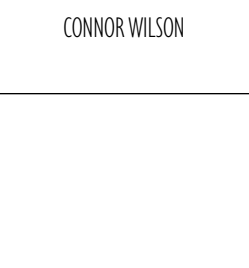
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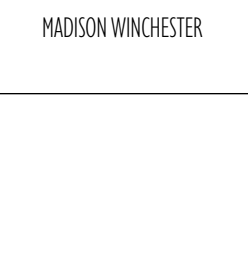
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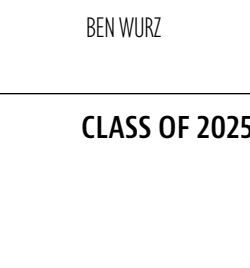
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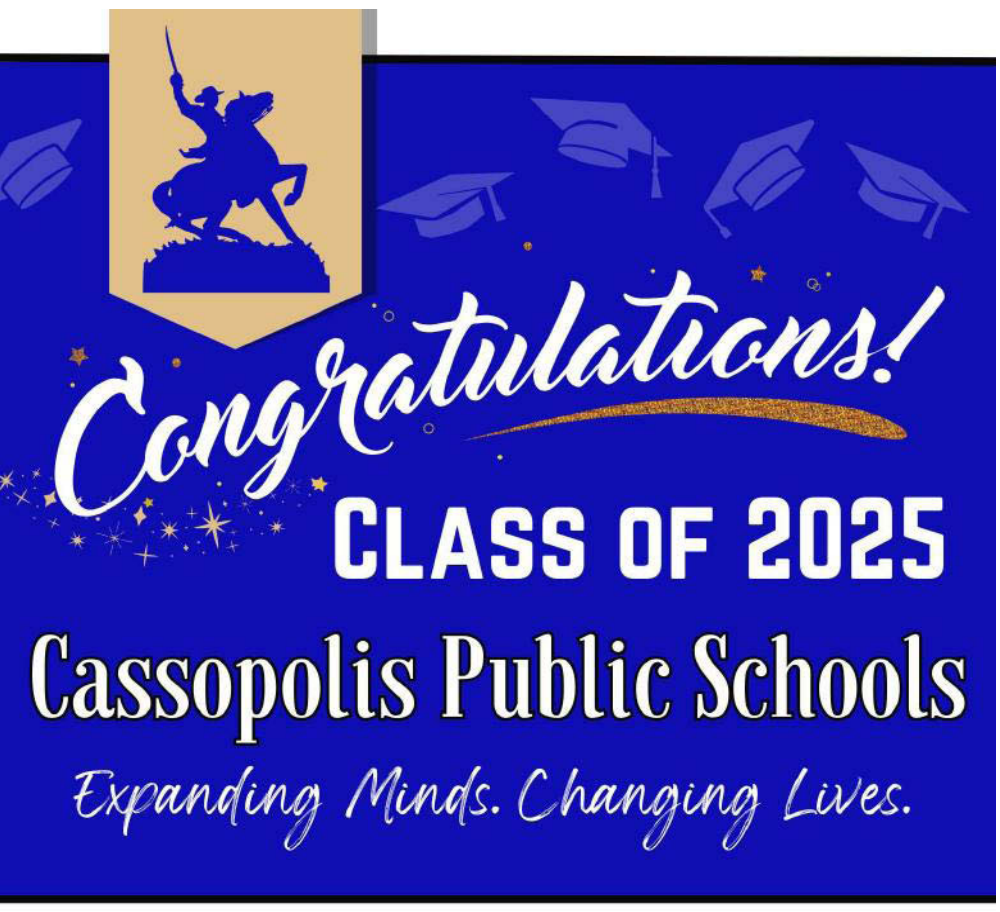

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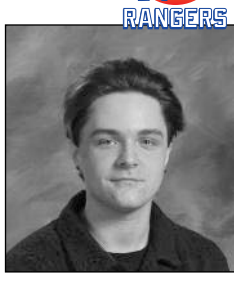
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BRENNA CHAFFEE

SAVANNA CHAMBERLIN

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BREECE COOPER

JOSEPHINE COYLE

MATTHEW DIEHL

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OWEN EATON

MAKAYLA ELLIOTT

LAYCEE ERICSON

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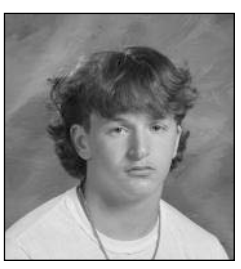
KIRSTEN FRANKS

DEVYN GARCIA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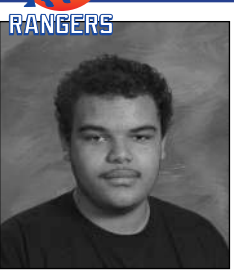
CAITLIN JONES

CASSOPOLIS RANGERS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KILEY KISTLER

BRODY KNEPPLE

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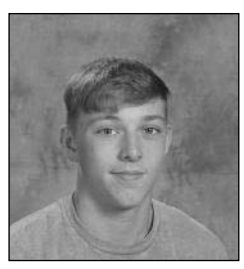
TEYANA LEE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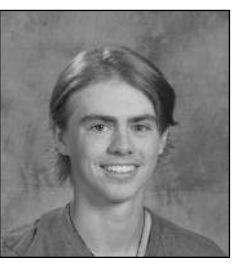
MATTHEW MCGREW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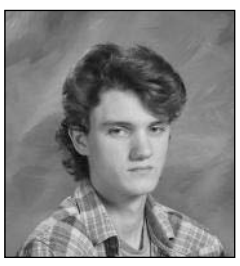
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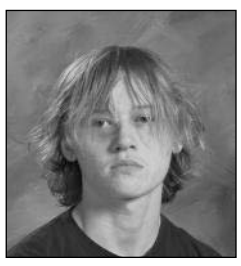
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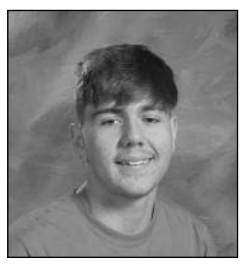
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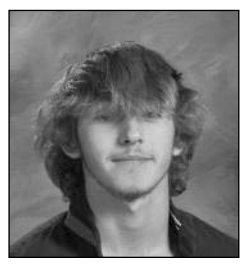
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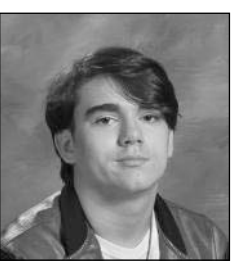
SOPHIA POMPEY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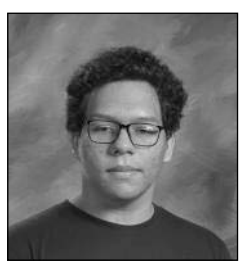
JAYLEEN REYES

BRAYDEN RICE

AURORA RODRIGUEZ


ANDREW SHAW

SARAH SIBLEY

ABBIGAIL SMEAD

ANNABELLE SMEAD

CARLEIGH STULL

OLGA SUAREZ

JERED WELLMAN

ASLYNN WEST

LILY WESTRATE

DOMINIC WHITE

LE'AIJSHANEA WILLIS

NIYANA WOODS

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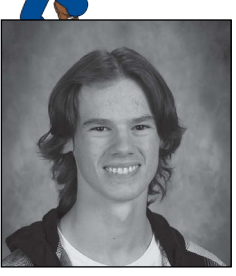
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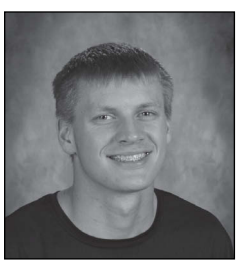

MATTHEW ANDERS

CALVIN ANDREWS

ELLA ARMOCK

GABRIEL BAILEY

MASON BALDWIN

BRIANA BARTAK-FERNANDEZ

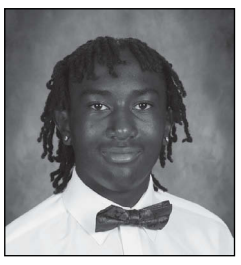
BREE BARTAK-MEDLIN

LEAH BENNETT

SKYLAR BENSON

COOPER BESSINGER

ABBIGAIL BIENZ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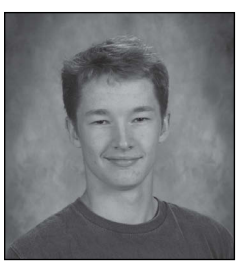
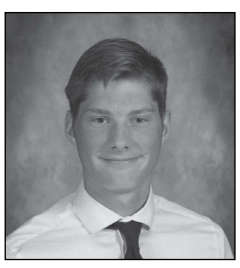
EMMA BILLINGTON

NADIA BLACK


NOAH BRIGHAM

YSOLDE BRUBAKER


DAKOTA BRYANT

DREW BURGESS

JAYCOB BURGESS-STAMBAUGH

JEWEL BURGESS-STAMBAUGH

DYLAN BUTRICK

DANIEL CARFI

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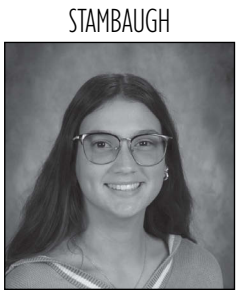
CARSEN CEBRA

ALAINY CHRISTIANSEN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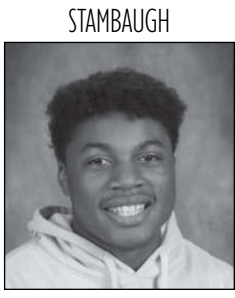

JACOB CISZCZON

COLE CLAIRE

OLIVIA CLOSSON

VICTORIA COLE

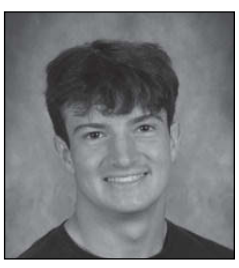
NOAH COLEMAN

MEGAN COOK

EMERSON CRIST

CHARLOTTE CULTICE

KAVIEN DANZY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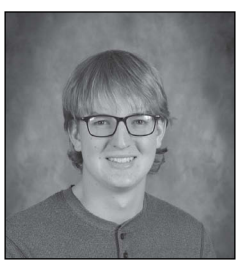
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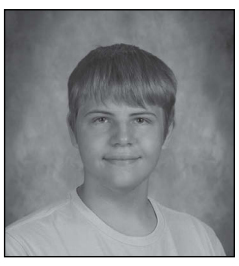
BRUCE DEWULF III

EVELYN DOUGAN

MMCKAYLA DRESSLER

OSSIAN DUCKWORTH


RICHARD DUIS

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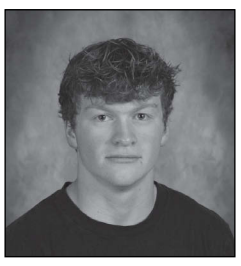
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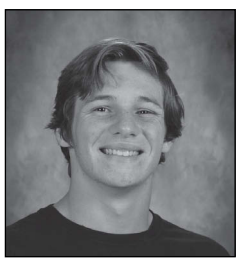
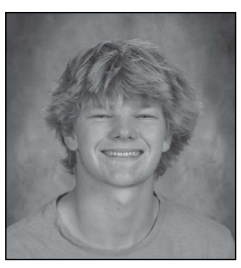

NICHOLAS EDGERTON

VAUGHAN ERNSBERGER

NICKLUS FEDDER

ALEXANDRIA FERGUSON

KELLEE FIRESTINE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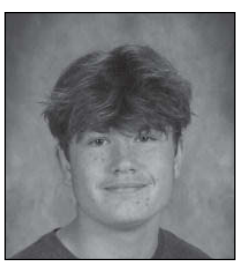
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BRAILEY FOWLER

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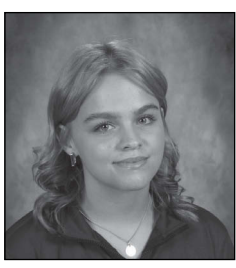
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TAYLOR GABLEMAN

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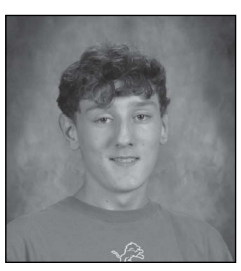
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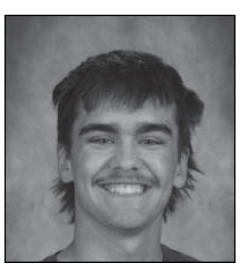
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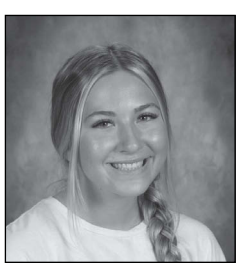
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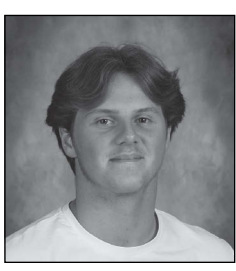
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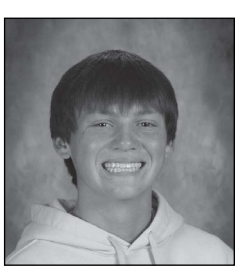
JAZMYN GULLEY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JILLIAN HALL

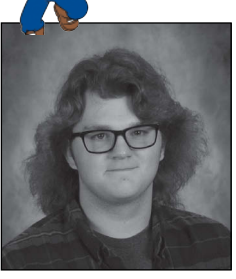
KAITLYN HAMILTON

LANI HARDIN

BRAYDEN HARDY

ABIGAIL HARTLEY

EDWARDSBURG EDDIES



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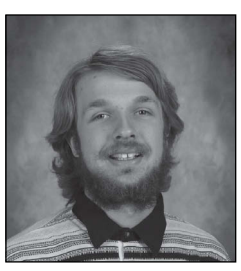

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HAILEY HORTON

BRAYDEN HORVATH

CARTER HOUSEWORTH

KEAGAN HOVEN

LANA HUENI

MIA HURD

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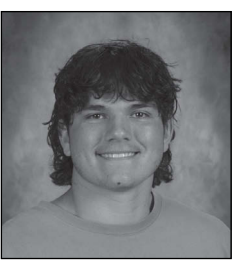
MAGUIRE JOHNSON

MORGAN KAMINSKAS



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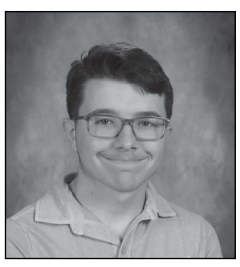
JACKSON KARKIEWICZ

ALIVIA KUNTZ

KAITLYNN LALIME



JACOB LAPORTE

JACOB LAWSON

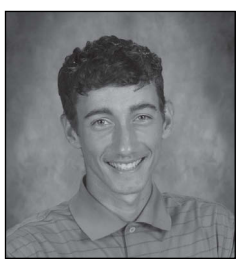
ALLISON LEE

BRADY LEEP

JON LEITH

ERIN LETTER

JULIA LEWIS



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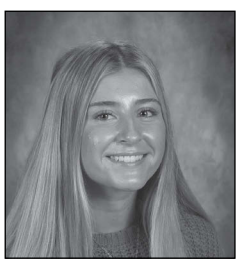
JOSEPH LUNDGREN

ARIANNA MACHADO

JULIA MATTHEWS

LOLA MCDANIEL

CATARINA MCGUIRE



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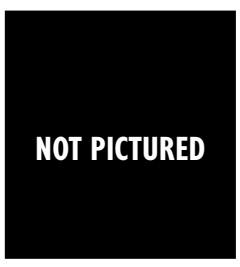


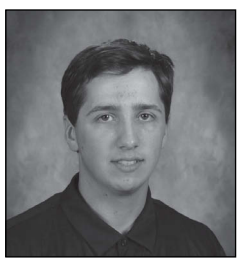
RYNE MCKAY

SKYLER MCKESSON

MAYA MCLAUGHLIN

BILLY MCMILLEN

EMILY MELTON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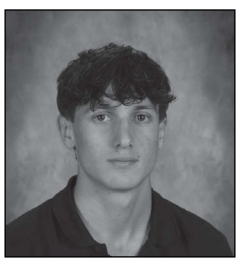
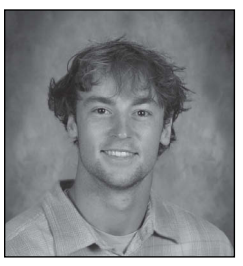
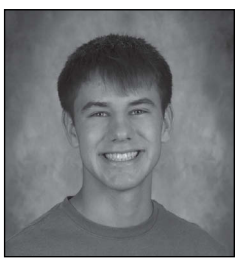

MARCO MONTANARI

VERONA MOODY


OSCAR MORRIS

CALLI MOSELEY

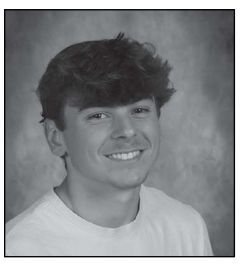
LENOXX MYERS


ASHTON NASH

GAVIN O'DAY

GABRIELLA OJEDA

GRACIE OLESON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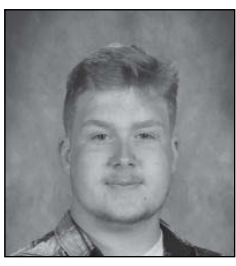
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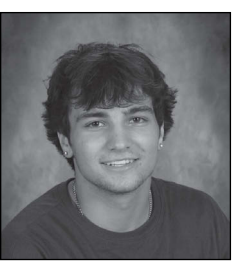
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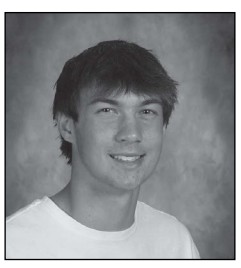
BAILEY PEARSON

MATTHEW PEASE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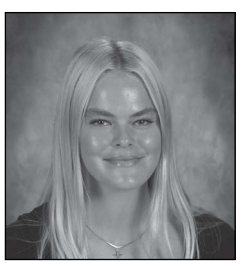
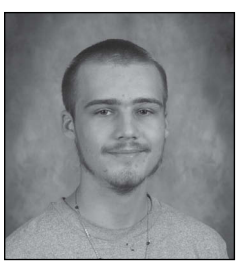
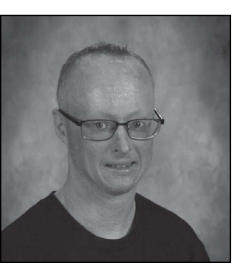

LAUREN PENTERIS

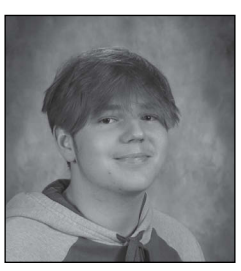

CHARLES PERRIN

JACOB PERRIN


KAYDEN PETERS

LEXIEA PETHICK

MADELYN POBUDA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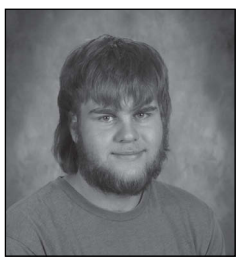
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KAYLEE SEABOLT

JULIA SEIFER

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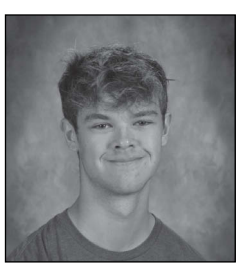
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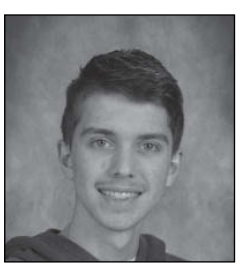
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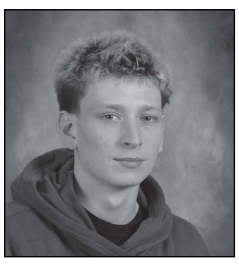
LILANE SHERWOOD

LORRAINE SLOCUM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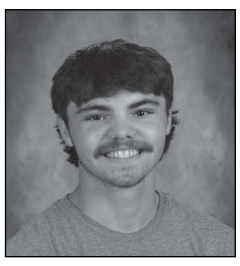
KATELYNN SOLAREK

MAURO SOTO-SOTO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EMILY SWIHART

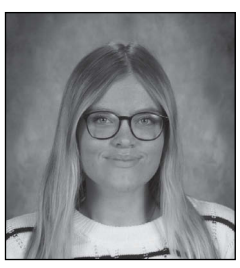
AMALIA SZALAI

SHELBY THIEL

LEVI TOWN

MASON TRAMMELL

ABIGAIL UMMEL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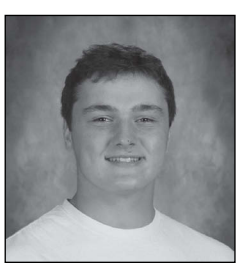
MARA VANBUREN

LILLIAN WAGGONER

JACE WALKER

NICHOLAS WALKER

MIKYLAH WALLACE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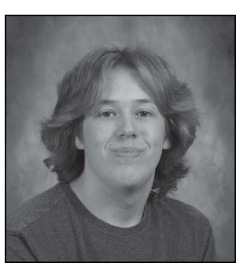
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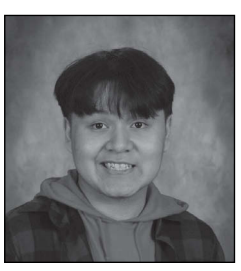
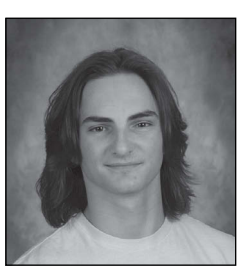

LANDYN XAYACHACK

TYRIS YODER

KADENCE YOWELL

KOURTNEY ZARYCKI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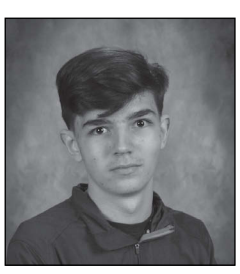
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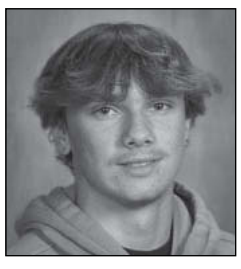
ONESIMO BARRANCO RIVERA

CELESTE BASORE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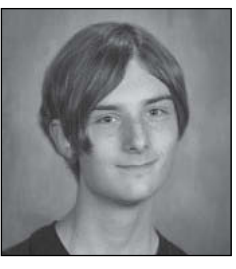
ZANE BOLYARD

ALAINA BOWMAN

GESELA BRAVO-TAFOYA

JAY'VONTE BRYANT


JOHN BULLARD

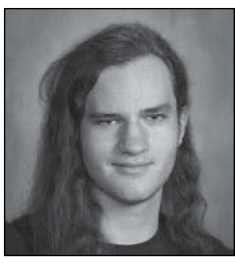
PEYTON BURGER

JUAN CAMPOS AGUILAR

ZOEE CANDLER

YARELI CAPULA

TAYSHAWN CARMICHEAL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KYLIE CLANTON

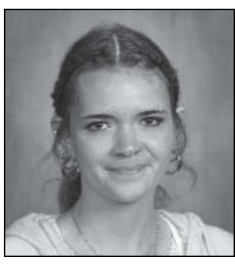
ELIZABETH COFFEE

SKYLA COLE

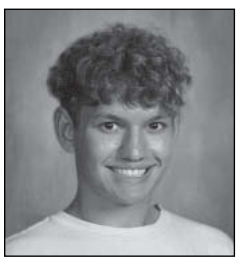
KYLIE CONN

RILEY COWAN

COLLIN CRONIN


ALEXIS CULP

JORDAN CUNNINGHAM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PAYTON DEMEYER

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DAVID DENNIS

VICTORIA DENSBORN

TUCKER DIERLAM

ANIDALE DOYLE

CHARLIE DREW

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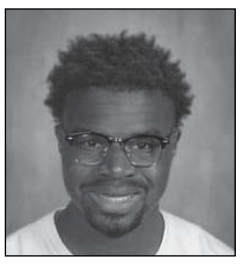
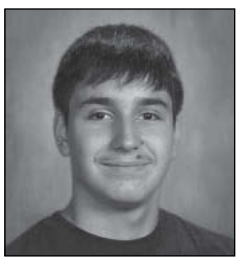

KALEB FERGUSON

CLOEY FOUST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ALEXA GARCIA

ALEXIS GARLANGER

KENDALL GERDES

AIDEN GESELLSCHAP

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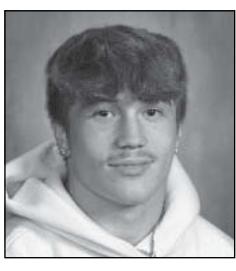
TROY GOODLOW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GARY GRADY

ADAM GRAY

ALYSSA HAMRICK

KAYLA HANSEN

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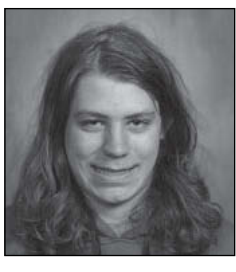
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BRAYDON HARTZKE

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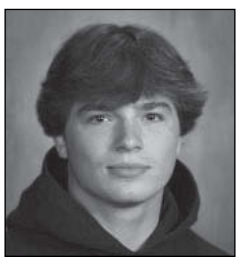
DEASIRE HERNANDEZ


PAUL HESS

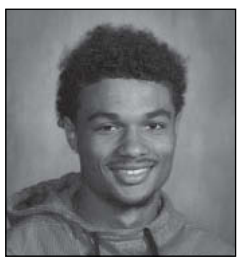
ANGELINA HILL

MEGAN HOJARA

IZABEL HOSKIN

AVA HOSKINS

BROOKLYN HOSKINS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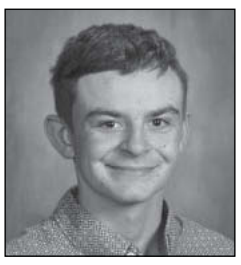
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ADAM JACKSON

AUBREY JACKSON

KAYDENCE JACOBS

MYLES JONES

JESSICA JOSE

ANNA KALLING

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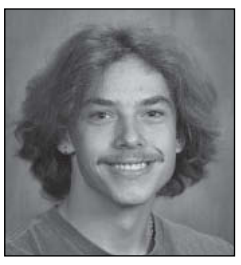
EMMA KATER-ELROD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ANNA KIER

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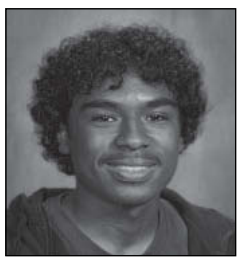
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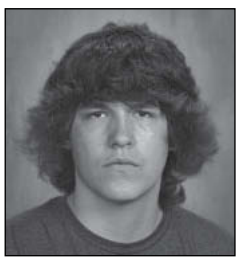
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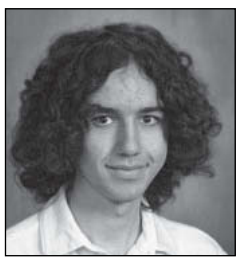
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LILLIAN LANDON

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JOSSLYN MAPLES

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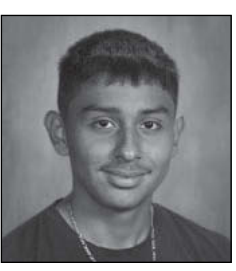
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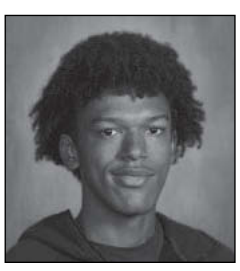
GABRIELLA MATLOCK

ANGELICA MAZUMDER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MEADOW MCFADDEN

NORIA MCHOPA

AUBREY MCINTOSH

JOSHUA MCINTYRE

KYLE MCKAY

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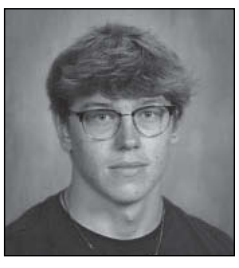
ZOE QUINTANA

JORDAN QUIST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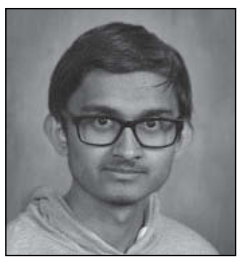
MICHAELA RIVERA

RAPHAEL RIVERA

JETSON RODGERS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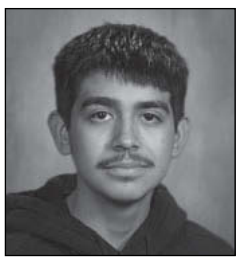
SAMUEL RUCKER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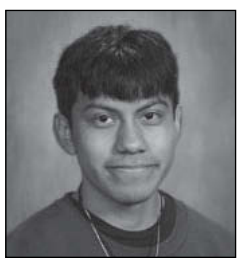
JAIME SANTANDREU DE LA FUENTE

BRAYLON SCHULTZ

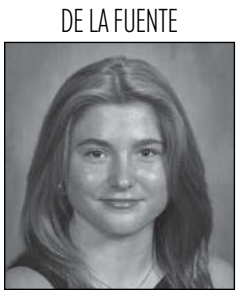
SIANA SCHUMACHER

JEZZILYNNE SCOTT


JESUS SILVESTRE

SHELBY SKALLA

TYLER SKOPEC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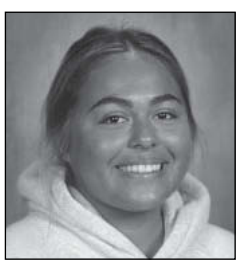
KELSEA SLATER

BRALEN SMITH

HANNAH SMITH

JAZMIN SMITH

SETH SMITH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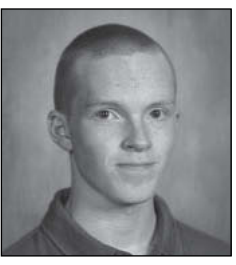
ELIZABETH SOTO

NAOMI STEPHENS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JATZITY SUASTO

OLIVIA TABERSKI

ANJA TABOR

ABIGAIL TALLEY

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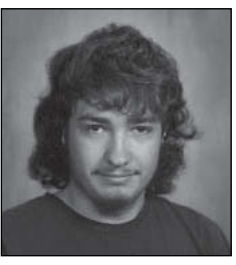
ADRIANNA TRINDADE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KEEGAN URBINA

AYRIAL VAIL

JAZZMINE VAIL

ITZAYANA VARGAS

NOT PICTURED
MADDISON WARD

MATTALYN WEINBERG

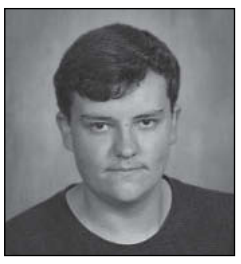
SEDONA WHITE

NATALIE WILDS

HAYLEA WILKEN

EMMA WILLIAMS

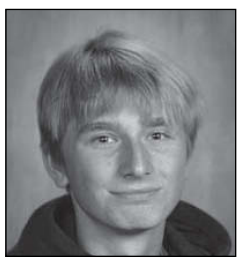
MARIAH WILLIAMS


SETH WINNINGHAM

ILYEE WIRICK

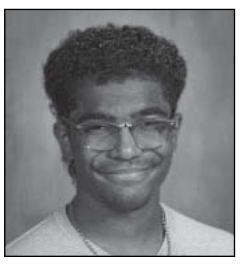
CAMERON WOODBURY

CHINA WOODS


CARSON WRIGHT

BRIAN YOUNG

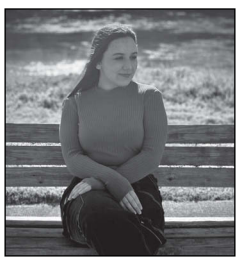
TOBY YOUNG


ADRIEL YOUNGER

ALEXANDRIA ASH

ALYSSA BENJAMIN

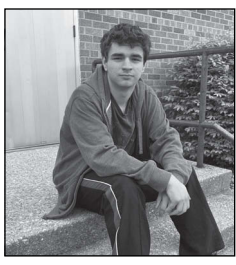
LINKIN BORN



KAYLEI COLLS

DIJUAN FOWLER

ASIALAKAY HAAS



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ADAIRIS HERNANDEZ

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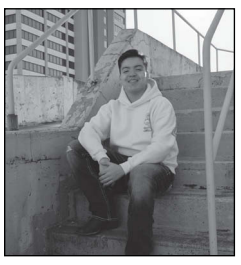
BROOKE LOFTUS

MARTIN MORENO



JOEL RAMIREZ

FAITH SIMMONS

KORYN URBINA

DESIREE VANARMAN-SNYDER

CARRERA WAREHIME

CLOVER WATSON

MAYA WEST

TYLER WIRICK

HONESTEE' WRIGHT

WAY PROGRAM

TRINITY CADY

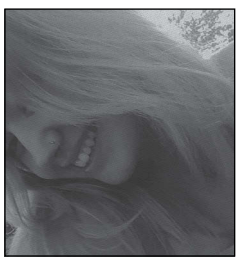
HEAVEN CARROLL

MONTANA CRABTREE

KAYANNA LANGE

SHAYLA PEPPERS

AVERY TACKETT



PAYTON WHITE

Congratulations, graduates!

From t-ball games to spelling bees, football championships to scholarship assemblies, it has been a joy to tell your story and watch you all grow. Best of luck in your next endeavors!

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